0-315-01219-6

National Library of Canada
Canadian Theses Division

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Division des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

49077

PERMISSION TO MICROFILM — AUTORISATION DE MICROFILMER

- Please print or type — Écrire en lettres moulées ou dactylographier

Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur
Patricia Ellen Porter

Date of Birth — Date de naissance June 16, 1955	Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance Canada

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe

P.O. Box 120
Czar, Alberta
T0B 0Z0

Title of Thesis — Titre de la thèse
"The Theme of 'Family Past' in William Faulkner's Sartoris, The Sound and the Fury, and As I Lay Dying".

University — Université
University of Alberta

Degree for which thesis was presented — Grade pour lequel cette thèse fut présentée
M.A.

Year this degree conferred — Année d'obtention de ce grade 1980	Name of Supervisor — Nom du directeur de thèse Dr. M. Legris

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.

Date October 31 1980	Signature Patricia Porter

NL-91 (4/77)

National Library of Canada
Collections Development Branch

Canadian Theses on
Microfiche Service

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Direction du développement des collections

Service des thèses canadiennes
sur microfiche

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us a poor photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de mauvaise qualité.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NL-339 (Rev. 8/80)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

"THE THEME OF 'FAMILY PAST' IN WILLIAM FAULKNER'S SARTORIS, THE SOUND AND THE FURY, AND AS I LAY DYING"

by

Ⓒ PATRICIA E. PORTER

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1980

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Theme of 'Family Past' in William Faulkner's *Sartoris*, *The Sound and the Fury*, and *As I Lay Dying*" submitted by Patricia E. Porter in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Maurice Legris
Supervisor

Rose

Burton N. Smith

DATE September 27/1980

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the development of one of the major themes in William Faulkner's early novels, Sartoris, The Sound and the Fury, and As I Lay Dying. I call this theme the theme of "family past," and define it as the influence of the past of an individual's family upon his sense of identity, feeling of self-worth, and responses to present realities. The individual's family past consists of a fraternal past (relationship with a brother or sister), a parental past (relationship with natural or foster parents), and an ancestral past (relationship with forebears no longer living). The development of the theme of "family past" is examined in each of the three novels in turn to discover the similarities and differences in the techniques and methods by which the theme is presented to the reader in these novels.

The first chapter of the thesis serves as an introduction to the topic by stating the purpose to be achieved, defining the terms which will be employed, and outlining the procedure which will be followed. This introductory chapter also indicates several areas of particular interest and points toward some possible conclusions.

The middle three chapters of this thesis are devoted to detailed examination of the three novels. These novels are examined in order of their publication: Sartoris in Chapter II, The Sound and the Fury in Chapter III, and As I Lay Dying in Chapter IV. In each case, the discussion of the theme of "family past" focuses upon one individual who is the most clearly and most profoundly influenced by his family's past. Each of the three chapters contains a brief summary and evaluation of relevant critical commentary, a detailed examination of the text, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the overall presentation of the theme. The conclusions reached in these three chapters indicate an increasing effectiveness in the presentation of the theme between the first of these novels and the last.

The concluding chapter of this thesis outlines the major changes which occur in the author's methods and techniques of thematic development within the three novels. My final conclusion is that the presentation of the theme of "family past" steadily improves in the course of the three novels. Sartoris, The Sound and the Fury, and As I Lay Dying therefore represent a progression in the author's skill in developing the theme of "family past."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

I. INTRODUCTION 1

II. SARTORIS 9

III. THE SOUND AND THE FURY 40

IV. AS I LAY DYING 77

V. CONCLUSION 113

* * * * * *

NOTES 120

BIBLIOGRAPHY 129

CHAPTER I

> . . . to me, no man is himself, he is the sum of his past. There is no such thing really as was because the past is. It is a part of every man, every woman, and every moment. All of his and her ancestry, background, is all a part of himself and herself at any moment.[1]

Replying to a student's question at the University of Virginia in 1957, William Faulkner used these words to explain a concept basic to his works. Stated in simplest terms, the concept is this: no one can escape the influence of his or her past. This thesis will examine one aspect of the past's influence upon the present as it is developed as a major theme in some of William Faulkner's finest writing. I call this aspect the "family past" and define it as the influence upon an individual of the past of his family, particularly as it affects his sense of identity, feeling of self-worth, and responses to the present realities of his life.

The development of this theme of "family past" will be examined in the three early novels, Sartoris, The Sound and the Fury, and As I Lay Dying.[2] I have chosen these three for consideration because it is, I believe, in these novels that Faulkner experimented with the theme of "family past," developing it in various ways and by means of various techniques--and with varying degrees of success--in order to determine the most effective way in which to present it to the reader. My purpose in this thesis will be to trace the changes and improvements which I see occurring within these three novels in Faulkner's method of development of the theme of "family past."

Before examining the novels, however, I think it is necessary to consider the implications of these concepts of "past" and "family past." With regard to the idea that an individual is the sum of his past, it is important to note that in these novels it is the individual's response to his past which is of primary importance. Faulkner's characters view past events in highly selective and intensely personal ways, and it is these responses, necessarily limited and subjective in nature, which influence their perceptions of present realities. As my examination of the novels will show, past events are almost always depicted from the viewpoint of the individual, and it is the way in which he sees the event rather than the event itself which is emphasized. Thus the individual is the sum of his past in that his response to it is shown to be the source of concepts and values upon which his view of life as a whole is based. In this way Faulkner's view of the past as "is" rather than "was" is dramatized. As one critic has observed, ". . . [Faulkner's] work has consistently demonstrated the presentness of the Past, as an influence, and as a measurable factor in shaping the Present."[3]

Another important point is raised by Faulkner's assertion that all of an individual's "ancestry" and "background" are forever a part of him. In its broadest sense, the past referred to in this statement could encompass every action, event, and relationship in any way connected with the individual's existence, whether directly through his personal experience, or indirectly through the family of which he is a member or the community of which he is a part. However, although the novels are focussed upon three families within the community of Yoknapatawpha County, the emphasis is not on the community, nor is it on the family, but on the individual as part of a family. In these novels the most important aspect by far of that past which is inevitably part of the individual is his response to his family's past. It is therefore certainly no accident that Faulkner chose to use the word "ancestry" in this context.

My examination of the novels will center upon Bayard Sartoris (Young Bayard), Quentin Compson, and Darl Bundren as the three individuals who are, in my opinion, the most profoundly influenced by their families' pasts. For each, inability to bring the circumstances of his own past and present into accord with his perception of his family's past produces an inner conflict. One result of this conflict is that each comes to view the realities of his life solely in the light of the conclusions he has reached concerning his family's past. Each extracts from this past an idea of his own worth, a sense of personal identity, and a rigid pattern of behaviour which will admit of neither alteration nor deviation. Thus, in each case, all of his "ancestry" and "background" are not simply a part of the individual at any given moment, but the major part of him at every moment.

The inability of these characters to strike a balance between past and present is partly accounted for by the fact that they are influenced by several different aspects of their families' pasts at the same time. These influences are of two main types, which I will designate as "fraternal" and "parental-ancestral." In each novel there is a fraternal family past centering upon the individual's relationship with a brother, or, in Quentin's case, a sister. As shall appear from examination of the novels, the influence of this aspect of the family's past is consistently powerful regardless of whether the relationship exists only in the past or continues into the present, and regardless of whether the brother or sister is living or dead, present or absent. The second type of family past consists of the individual's relationships to all of his known forebears. It can be further differentiated as "parental" (the influence of either the individual's natural parents or of those who stand in their stead) and "ancestral" (the influence of forebears no longer living). All of these aspects of the family's past are, of course, closely related, and their influences upon the individual tend to be mutually reinforcing.

In Sartoris the fraternal family past is Bayard's relationship with his twin brother, John, who, as an Air Corps pilot in World War I, risked and lost his life in the bold, carefree manner of his ancestors. Bayard's response to his death is greatly influenced by his response to his ancestral family past. Since he has unquestioningly accepted the reckless daring of his ancestors as the standard of masculine behaviour, he cannot live with the fact that his brother has proved himself a worthy descendant of the Sartoris tradition while he has returned alive and undistinguished to an uneventful civilian existence. Bayard's response is further complicated by Old Bayard and Aunt Jenny, the representatives of the parental influence, who have in their own ways glorified the typical pattern of Sartoris behaviour. Bayard's responses to these combined influences from his family's past lead him to entertain distorted perceptions of his own worth (he feels he is despicable and unworthy of the name of Sartoris), of his personal identity (he sees himself as the cowardly descendant of a long line of heroes), and of the pattern of behaviour he should follow (he is convinced that he can redeem himself only by proving his daring to be equal to that of his brother). The irrational despair and suicidal behaviour which result from his distorted perception of present realities are thus outward manifestations of an inner conflict arising from his response to the Sartoris family past.

Quentin Compson's fraternal family past is his relationship with his sister, Caddy, who, seduced at the age of eighteen, has drifted into promiscuity, become pregnant, and married a man she does not love in order to salvage her reputation and legitimize her child. Quentin's response to the situation is tremendously influenced by his response to his family's past. Like Bayard, he has idealized the behaviour of his ancestors and established it as a standard of conduct for himself; yet, unlike Bayard, his compulsion is not to imitate specific feats. Rather, Quentin has extracted from his family's past a code of family honour and an ideal of chivalric behaviour which he rigidly imposes upon the present realities of his life. As a result, he cannot come to terms with Caddy's promiscuity because it is to him a flouting of the family's honour, and he cannot live with the fact that he has failed to prevent it, and thereby fallen short of his chivalric ideal. As for Bayard Sartoris, obsession with an ancestral ideal is increased by parental influence. Completely inadequate as parents, Jason and Caroline Compson have forced their children to look elsewhere for support and affirmation. In particular, Quentin's father has indirectly encouraged him to uphold a rigid concept of honour by denying all possibility of meaning in human life and human actions. As a result of his responses to these combined influences, Quentin suffers from distorted perceptions of his own worth (he feels he is despicable because he has neither protected his sister's honour nor avenged her disgrace), of his personal identity (he sees himself as the last, albeit inadequate, champion of honour and chivalry), and of the pattern of behaviour he should follow (he is convinced that the only way to salvage the family's honour is to emphasize its loss by means of a dramatic action on his part). Quentin attempts to convert Caddy's slighting of the family's honour into incest and, that failing, commits suicide as a final assertion of the significance of her actions.

The influence of the family's past in As I Lay Dying can be summarized with greater ease and brevity, as the relationships between the different aspects are less complex, and their effects upon the individual more obvious. For Darl, the fraternal aspect is his relationship with his brother, Jewel, which in the past has been, and in the present continues to be, an extremely important influence upon him. The ancestral past is only briefly mentioned in this novel, and it is no abstract concept of courage or honour or proper behaviour which influences this fraternal relationship. The simple truth is that Darl is jealous of Jewel for being their mother's favourite. His obsession is with Jewel himself --his physical appearance, his behaviour, his actions during the funeral journey. This response is largely explainable in terms of cause-and-effect, as Addie's monologue reveals: Darl was rejected by her as the unwanted product of a loveless, superficial relationship, while Jewel was accepted and loved as the outcome of a relationship which was meaningful for her, although adulterous. The combined influences of these fraternal and parental aspects of his family's past affect Darl's perception of himself to the extent that he doubts his very existence, and is compelled to constantly seek a sense of personal identity. His perceptions of and responses to outward realities are also affected, as shown by his frequent antagonism toward Jewel. In Darl's case, distortions of perception occur all the more readily as a result of the unusual, if not abnormal, way in which he perceives reality from the outset.

It should be apparent even from this brief discussion that there are significant differences in the presentation of the theme of "family past" in these three novels. Between the first of these novels and the last, two important changes occur in the way in which the family's past is shown to influence the individual. The first is that the two major types of family past, the fraternal and the parental-ancestral, draw closer together in time to each other and to the individual. In Sartoris Bayard's brother John is dead, the flamboyant ancestors he idealizes are of another era, and Aunt Jenny and Old Bayard, who replace his dead parents, are removed from him by two generations. However, in The Sound and the Fury Caddy is merely absent, Quentin's parents are both living, and his ancestors, although as remote in time as Bayard's, exert a less direct influence upon him. Finally, in As I Lay Dying Jewel is both living and present, Darl's ancestors (with the exception of Addie's father) are not mentioned, Anse is living, and Addie, who dies part way through the novel, continues to exert a powerful influence upon her children throughout.

The second change is that the individual's obsession with certain ideas and values derived from his family's past becomes increasingly linked to physical reality. Bayard Sartoris' obsessive need to "prove himself" grows out of an assumption about the nature of courage which is of an abstract nature, having little connection with physical reality and therefore impossible to prove valid or invalid by physical means. Although Quentin's equation of virginity with honour is as arbitrary as Bayard's equation of fearlessness with courage, there is at least some physical counterpart (Caddy's virginity or non-virginity) to Quentin's obsessive concern with family honour. In Darl's case, the obsession (his sense of non-identity) is very firmly rooted in the concrete: Darl, though a legitimate child, has been "disowned" emotionally by his mother, while the bastard Jewel has been accepted and cherished as the true son.

These changes in the nature of the influence which the family's past has upon the individual will be considered at greater length in the course of detailed examination of the novels in the next three chapters. This examination will also be concerned with the changes which occur in the author's handling of such basic techniques as characterization and point of view. The effects of these changes upon the presentation of the theme of "family past" as a whole may then be calculated.

The three novels will be considered in order of publication: Sartoris in Chapter II, The Sound and the Fury in Chapter III, and As I Lay Dying in Chapter IV. Each of these chapters will begin with a brief summary of the major critical opinions which have been advanced regarding the importance and operation of the theme of "family past" in that novel. I will then proceed with a step-by-step examination of the development of this theme in the novel, with such technical aspects as language and imagery taken into consideration only insofar as they contribute significantly to the thematic development. In the conclusion of each of these chapters I will present my own evaluation of the author's overall presentation of the theme of "family past." In Chapter V, the final chapter of this thesis, I will demonstrate how my examination and evaluation of each of the texts supports my contention that the presentation of the theme of "family past" not only changes, but improves, between the first of these novels and the last. My final goal will be to show how the changes which occur in both the conception of the theme and the techniques used to develop it can be seen to form a progression through the three novels which culminates in a controlled, dramatic, and highly effective presentation of the theme of "family past."

CHAPTER II

> As usual, old man Falls had brought John Sartoris into the room with him . . . fetching, like an odor . . . the spirit of the dead man into that room where the dead man's son sat and where the two of them, pauper and banker, would sit for a half an hour in the company of him who had passed beyond death and then returned.
>
> Freed as he was of time and flesh, he was a far more palpable presence than either of the two old men who sat shouting periodically into one another's deafness. . . . He was far more palpable than the two old men cemented by a common deafness to a dead period and so drawn thin by the slow attenuation of days; even now, although old man Falls had departed . . . John Sartoris seemed to loom still in the room, above and about his son, with his bearded, hawklike face, so that . . . it seemed to [Old Bayard] that he could hear his father's breathing even, as though that other were so much more palpable than mere transiently articulated clay as to even penetrate into the uttermost citadel of silence in which his son lived.[1]

These opening paragraphs of Sartoris effectively establish the tone of a novel in which the past constantly impinges upon the present. The Sartorises seem to live with their ancestors peering over their shoulders: they have ghosts in the parlour, relics in the attic, and family stories which have grown into legends through constant retelling. In such a novel one would expect the influence of the ancestral family past upon the lives of all of the major characters to be of unquestionable importance. However, the protagonist, Young Bayard, seems completely oblivious of his ancestral shades; the only ghost which haunts him is that of his twin brother, John. Thus the ancestral past of the Sartoris family and the fraternal past of the novel's central character appear to follow separate, parallel lines of thematic development. However, although there is no *explicit* link between these two aspects of Bayard's family past, the influence of the Sartoris tradition upon his relationship with his brother and upon his responses to present realities is very strongly implied. Showing how these implications work will be an important part of my examination of the novel, and it will be necessary to evaluate the success of this implicit method of thematic development in order to judge the effectiveness of the presentation of the theme of "family past" as a whole.

Due to the lack of an explicit link between two major aspects of the theme, critical opinion upon the operation and importance of "family past" in the novel has varied greatly. I think it not unfair to describe the view set forth by Cleanth Brooks in his study, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, as representing one extreme. Brooks sees Young Bayard as simply one more member of the "lost generation" produced by World War I, who upon returning home must resume a life which has lost its former meaning and significance. Accordingly, he sees the function of the Sartoris family past as limited to the providing of a background of tradition, stability, and order against which the protagonist's situation will appear all the more hopeless and pitiable.[2]

Although Frederick Hoffman recognizes that the ancestral family past exerts an influence upon Young Bayard, he proposes an interpretation of Bayard's response to it which is not, I believe, substantiated by the text. Without taking into account such evidence to the contrary as--to mention only the most obvious example--Bayard's eager pursuit of violence and danger, Hoffman asserts that Bayard completely rejects the Sartoris tradition of masculine behaviour: "Bayard Sartoris cannot bring himself to accepting violence of any sort as romantic. . . ."[3] He declares that Bayard has found the Sartoris outlook upon life to be "disastrously misleading," and therefore concludes that he is "a forlorn and unhappy--

though an angry--testimony of the collapse of legends."[4]

Irving Howe views the novel from the standpoint of what he refers to in his preface as "social and moral themes." Accordingly, he sees Bayard's problem as "inability to achieve a sustaining relationship with the tradition of his family and native region."[5] His underlying assumption is that the tradition of the Sartoris family is "vital" and "moral," and that if Young Bayard would only embrace it he would be cured of his self-destructive despair. However, Howe completely overlooks the possibility that it may be a too-fervent acceptance of the Sartoris tradition as the determining influence in his life which is destroying Young Bayard. He concludes that ". . . Bayard, a sullen and muddled young man, does not understand what the tradition is or is supposed to be."[6]

Irving Malin sees the opposition of rigidity and movement to be a central pattern in Faulkner's works. In Sartoris he rightly considers the characters' responses to the family tradition to represent inflexibility, and aptly describes the consequences for them: ". . . these characters cannot come to terms with present conditions because they do not understand both the potentialities and limitations of their heritage."[7] Unfortunately, Malin goes on to apply the idea of rigidity versus motion more specifically, and more restrictively. He sees inflexible parents or ancestors as the representatives of rigidity, and rebellious sons as the forces of life and motion which oppose them. This leads him to interpret Young Bayard's escapades as rebellion against the Sartoris tradition, and to completely overlook the possibility that they may constitute an attempt, not to repudiate his heritage, but to live up to it.

In agreement with him is Kenneth Richardson, who sees the

Sartoris tradition as an inflexible pattern opposing change and individuality: "The family legend dictates a specific type of character and action for all of the male Sartorises. Each male descendant is expected to be as powerful, gallant, reckless, and violent as his forefathers."[8] Richardson also perceives the nature of the inner conflict produced by Bayard's response to his family's past:

> Young Bayard Sartoris soon discovers that he is expected to fulfill the legend and the design of his great grandfather, but he seems to lack the power to do this. He will not admit this to himself, however, and he refuses to judge and condemn the validity of the Sartoris dream. Therefore, he is caught in an insoluble dilemma.[9]

Having said this much, it is both surprising and unfortunate that Richardson dismisses the issues his interpretation has raised by adopting Malin's conclusion that Bayard's actions constitute a revolt against the Sartoris tradition. If, as Richardson maintains, Bayard "refuses to judge and condemn the validity" of the tradition, it seems to me illogical to conclude that he is in revolt against it.

Various other critics have attempted to determine the degree and the nature of the influence which the ancestral-parental family past has upon Young Bayard. Two scholars have, however, made especially valuable contributions. James Watson demonstrates how Faulkner's use of image patterns and narrative form in the novel creates a sense of the ancestral past's powerful influence upon the lives of the surviving Sartorises. Pointing out the ways in which this influence affects Young Bayard, Watson concludes, ". . . the psychic wound which tortures him and drives him finally into an unsafe test plane results from the disjunction which is everywhere apparent between his own deeds and the Sartoris legend. . . ."[10] Taking another approach, Olga Vickery centers her discussion upon the Sartoris legend and analyzes its effect upon Young Bayard. She concludes that he is destroyed by his attempt to uphold a family tradition, the demands of which he is not suited by nature to fulfill:

> The danger arises when the individual first seeks a certain preconceived pattern and then, not finding it, forces it upon his experience. The designs created and preserved by legend and tradition cannot be faked or bought by cheap imitations. Only that man who is driven to the re-enactment of a legend by the necessity of his own nature does no violence to himself or his humanity.[11]

Watson and Vickery represent the other extreme of critical opinion upon the development of the theme of "family past" in the novel. Whereas Cleanth Brooks regards the Sartoris family past as at best only tenuously related to Young Bayard's problems, these two critics do not seem to doubt that the relationship between ancestral past and fraternal past is at every point unmistakably clear. My own position is somewhere between these two extremes. On the one hand, I am convinced that there is an important thematic relationship between the ancestral past of the Sartoris family and the fraternal past of Bayard and his brother, John. However, on the other hand, I believe that this relationship is not nearly as clear and straightforward as many critics would have us think it is. In examining the text it will be my purpose to show that the ancestral and fraternal aspects of Young Bayard's past are indeed related, but only implicitly. Furthermore, because the thematic development is largely based upon this implied relationship, I intend to show that the presentation of the theme of "family past" in the novel is considerably more complex than has generally been thought to be the case.

* * * * *

In his afterword to the novel Lawrance Thompson notes the unusual plot structure of Sartoris and makes the following observation:

> The best unifying element here is not plot but theme; a theme that is illuminated through Faulkner's artistic process of placing young Bayard's disconnected actions within the historical-genealogical framework provided by the lives and times of his immediate ancestors.[12]

The artistic process to which Thompson refers is an important means of developing the theme of "family past" throughout the novel, but is used most extensively in the opening section. Part I of the novel introduces elements of the Sartoris family tradition, recounts tales of Sartoris ancestors, and demonstrates the effects of these traditions and legends on two surviving Sartorises; and all of this occurs before the protagonist appears for the first time. In this way Young Bayard is from the outset placed within the "historical-genealogical framework" of his family's past, and the potential of this past to influence his life is thereby implied.

In Part I the "framework" is established by means of a double focus upon Old Bayard and Aunt Jenny. As the opening paragraphs of the novel indicate, the first impression conveyed to the reader is that of Old Bayard's sense of his dead father's presence (see above, p. 9). That John Sartoris has been, and continues to be, a powerful influence upon his son's life is indicated by the emphasis placed upon his "palpableness." In the first two paragraphs of the novel he is three times described as having a more substantial existence in memory than Will Falls and Old Bayard have in life. In this way the opening paragraphs help to set the stage for a narrative in which the past may influence the present to the point of overshadowing it.

Young Bayard is mentioned within the first few pages of the novel, and although the reference is very brief, it gains significance from the context in which it occurs. Immediately following the introduction of one Bayard in his close relationship with the past is the mention of a second Bayard, who is also linked with the family's past. Simon criticizes Young Bayard's manner of homecoming as inappropriate behaviour for a Sartoris: "'Wouldn't even git off at de dee-po' . . . 'de dee-po his own folks built.' . . . 'Sneakin' into town on de ve'y railroad his own gran-pappy built, jes' like he wuz trash'" (S, p. 22). This incident, although trivial in itself, does suggest that Young Bayard is expected to behave in accordance with a standard set by his ancestors.

The Civil War tale told and retold by Jenny Sartoris Du Pre introduces yet another Bayard. Thus three characters named Bayard Sartoris, belonging to three different generations, are mentioned in the first half-dozen pages of the novel. This seemingly wilful confusion of the reader has a definite thematic purpose: ". . . the meanings deliberately fragmented or withheld in the opening section establish the overriding sense of Sartoris as a way of life which adheres in the accounts of [Young] Bayard's behavior in the sections following."[13]

This "sense of Sartoris as a way of life" is developed by means of the stories of previous Bayards and Johns scattered throughout the novel. Of these stories, Miss Jenny's tale of the "Carolina Bayard," who was killed in a raid on a Yankee commissary tent, makes the most important contribution to the development of the theme of "family past." This tale (or legend, as it has become) points out a number of typical Sartoris traits: tendency toward vainglory, romantic sense of fatality, love of violent and dangerous action, and glorification of a sort of daring which relies more on recklessness than courage. When Young Bayard's exploits later in the novel are characterized by these same propensities, the reader can little doubt the source of the pattern upon which his behaviour is based. More importantly, the way in which the characters are shown to respond to the story, idealizing its hero and glorifying his reckless deeds, helps to explain why the family's male descendants feel compelled to carry on the Sartoris tradition at all costs.

It is clear from the outset that the character who has romanticized the Carolina Bayard's exploits to the greatest degree is the narrator of the tale herself. Miss Jenny, who prefers "lively romance to the most impeccable of dun fact" (S, p. 48), has in the course of years allowed the tale to become "richer and richer, taking on a mellow splendor like wine" (S, p. 25). The degree to which she has improved upon the truth becomes clear when the story is reduced to its essential facts: Bayard Sartoris did not die heroically defending the South in a pitched battle with the enemy--he was shot in the back by a terrified cook as he tried to steal a jar of anchovies. Furthermore, he is explicitly criticized by his commanding officer, Jeb Stuart, as "'too reckless'" (S, p. 31), while the behaviour of Stuart himself is at one point described by a member of the enemy forces as "'the rashness of a heedless and headstrong boy'" (S, p. 30). In spite of these facts, the tale paints a picture of glorious daring which is accepted at face value by its fictional auditors.

This juxtaposition of bare facts with the romantic fiction surrounding them is achieved through a skilful handling of point of view, language, and imagery. Faulkner does not tell the story from Miss Jenny's point of view, for to do so would necessitate a highly romantic version in keeping with her character, and the essential facts of the story would not emerge with sufficient emphasis. Instead, the story is told in the omniscient narrative voice and all unflattering details are included, yet it is told in such a way that Miss Jenny's imaginative embellishment of the truth is conveyed to the reader, even though her actual words are not given. Faulkner does this by describing the actions of Bayard Sartoris and Jeb Stuart, though foolhardy and rash to the point of absurdity, in heroic terms. For example, the Rebel troop gallops "with the thunderous coördination of a single centaur," led by Stuart, whose "long tawny locks . . . appeared as gallant flames smoking with the wild and self-consuming splendor of his daring" (S, p. 28). In this way Faulkner is able to reveal the unheroic side of Sartoris' and Stuart's behaviour, yet at the same time show how their actions have been converted into feats of glorious daring by admirers such as Miss Jenny.

Faulkner's skilful manipulation of the tale's central image reveals the effect of this glorification of their deeds upon the imaginations of others. The image first appears when he describes Miss Jenny as having transformed "two heedless and reckless boys" into "two angels valiantly fallen and strayed" (S, p. 25). Such a transformation is certainly in keeping with Miss Jenny's preference for romance, yet Faulkner shows that other individuals have been similarly affected by using what is essentially the same image a few paragraphs later to describe the impression made by Sartoris' and Stuart's military exploits: ". . . against the dark and bloody obscurity of the northern Virginia campaigns, Stuart at thirty and Bayard Sartoris at twenty-three stood briefly like two flaming stars . . . incalculable and sudden as meteors . . ." (S, pp. 25-26). The image is repeated a third time when Faulkner describes the effect of the story upon Miss Jenny's audience: ". . . Bayard

Sartoris' brief career swept like a shooting star across the dark plain of their mutual remembering and suffering . . ." (S, p. 31). Thus, "Although the past as legend is belied by historical fact, the author, his character, and her auditors affirm its veracity by their recurrent use of the same allusion."[14] In other words, this use of imagery enables Faulkner to show how the facts of the story have been transformed by the characters' responses. As a result, the image of Stuart and Sartoris as "two heedless and reckless boys" recedes into the background, while the image of "two angels valiantly fallen and strayed" is emphasized and affirmed.

In short, Faulkner's skilful manipulation of point of view, language, and imagery allows him to present a legend of heroism side-by-side with the less-than-heroic events from which it was created, and in this way to reveal the extent to which the imaginative responses of the characters have overpowered the facts of the story. It is clear that for the descendants of the Carolina Bayard, the circumstances of his death have faded to insignificance; it is the aura of flamboyant heroism they have bestowed upon him which is important. Thus, by depicting the characters' responses to their ancestral family past, Faulkner indirectly reveals the nature of the influence which this past has upon them. The story also shows that, in this case, the parental influence (Miss Jenny) is closely combined with, and reinforces, the ancestral one. A male descendant such as Young Bayard is inevitably subject to these combined influences, and it is hardly to be expected that he could remain unaffected by them.

The opening chapter of the novel also contains the first tale of John Sartoris, the highlight of which is his clever escape from a Yankee patrol. It is clear that Old Bayard, who contributes the other half of the parental influence upon the protagonist's life, also responds to and reinforces the influence of the ancestral family past, although not as explicitly as Miss Jenny. The extent to which this past may influence the lives of Sartoris descendants is here even more strongly suggested: "And the next day [Col. John Sartoris] was dead, whereupon . . . by losing the frustration of his own flesh he could now stiffen and shape that which sprang from him into the fatal semblance of his dream . . ." (S, p. 35). This story and that of the Carolina Bayard, both related in the first chapter, establish the "sense of Sartoris as a way of life" by revealing the unwritten code of behaviour, exemplified by dead Sartorises and endorsed by living ones, to which all male members of the family traditionally conform. The various other tales subsequently related in the novel help to keep this sense constantly before the reader.

One other aspect of the "historical-genealogical framework" established as a context for the protagonist's actions must here be mentioned. Beginning in the opening section of the novel and continuing throughout is Miss Jenny's declaration of the Sartoris code of conduct. At fairly regular intervals she sets forth the established pattern of behaviour for all Sartorises, past, present, and future, with remarks such as the following:

> 'No Sartoris ever goes to the cemetery but once . . .' (S, p. 43).
>
> '. . . no Sartoris is going to stay in heaven any longer than he can help' (S, p. 69).
>
> 'Did you ever hear of a Sartoris dying from a natural cause, like anybody else?' (S, p. 96).
>
> . . . home would be the last place in the world a Sartoris with a broken head would ever consider going (S, p. 132).

Although Miss Jenny's half-humorous pronouncements are clearly not intended to be taken literally (she herself disproves the first by visiting the cemetery in the last section of the novel), they do help to reveal the type of influence she has upon Young Bayard. Miss Jenny always refers to "Sartorises" or "a Sartoris," as if the family were a race unto itself, governed by its own laws. Also, her remarks imply that Sartorises inevitably follow a pattern of behaviour irrevocably and unalterably established; as one critic has remarked, "When she is telling Young Bayard to behave more rationally, she is also doubting that he can."[15] Of course, there is no explicit proof that Miss Jenny has instilled her own attitudes in Young Bayard. However, although it is not explicitly shown that he shares Miss Jenny's and Old Bayard's opinions (and thus is influenced by his parental family past), or that he responds to the tales of past glory (and thus is influenced by his ancestral family past), the elaborate and complex "framework" which is established in the first fifty pages of the novel does implicitly prepare the reader for a protagonist whose responses to present realities, and particularly to the death of his twin brother, will prove to be greatly influenced by such factors.

At his first appearance in the novel Young Bayard reveals an intense and uneasy preoccupation with the death of his brother.[16] His first words, "'I tried to keep him from going up there on that goddam little popgun'" (S, pp. 50-51), recurring three times with slight variations during this first appearance, are self-justifying in tone and suggest an underlying sense of guilt in the matter of Johnny's death. That he repeatedly calls his brother a fool and emphasizes the fact that Johnny shot at him when he tried to interfere are further indications of an uneasy desire to vindicate himself and his actions. Also, it is interesting that Young Bayard describes how he avenged his brother even before he relates the circumstances of Johnny's death. The repetition of the phrase, "'him and his skull and bones'" (S, p. 51, p. 52), identifies the enemy pilot Young Bayard succeeded in shooting down as the same man who killed his brother. The emphasis he places upon this revenge and his obvious pride in it clearly also arise from a need for self-vindication: "'It was Ploeckner,' he added, and for the moment his voice was still and untroubled with vindicated pride. 'He was one of the best they had. Pupil of Richthofen's'" (S, p. 52).

Further evidence of Young Bayard's intense preoccupation with his dead brother closes the chapter and the first part of the novel. Returning to the room he occupied first with Johnny and later with his wife, he recalls how on the last night before returning to the Front he was thinking not of her, but of his brother, whom he would there rejoin. Then, as now, Johnny occupied his thoughts to the exclusion of all else. Such memories have, however, a disturbing effect upon him:

> He was thinking of his dead brother; the spirit of their violent complementing days lay like dust everywhere in the room, obliterating that other presence [his wife's], stopping his breathing, and he went to the window and flung the sash crashing upward and leaned there, gulping air into his lungs like a man who has been submerged and who still cannot believe that he has reached the surface again (S, p. 54).

This first view of Young Bayard raises a number of questions about his relationship to his brother and to the traditions of his family. He appears to suffer from an unwarranted sense of guilt associated with Johnny's death, yet in describing his revenge he displays all the pride at having defeated a worthy opponent which one would expect from a Sartoris.

He is preoccupied with his brother to the point of obsession, and his memories clearly oppress him and produce some sort of mental anguish. In short, Young Bayard looks like a Sartoris--the "hawklike planes of his face" (S, p. 50) mark him unmistakably as a descendant of Col. John Sartoris--and to some extent behaves like one, yet he displays some very "un-Sartorian" sensitivities and self-doubtings. Although presenting his protagonist from the omniscient point of view, Faulkner has by no means allowed the reader complete access to his mind. Rather, certain aspects of Young Bayard's character have been illuminated, revealing some expected and some unexpected qualities, but at this point in the novel most of his character remains in darkness.

In Young Bayard's two brief appearances in the first four chapters of Part II, his "leashed cold violence" (S, p. 75) and "bleak eyes" (S, p. 83) are described, but the reader is given no further clues as to his inner state. These chapters, which provide additional information about the Sartorises and introduce several new characters, maintain the sense of an omnipresent family past through scenes such as the conversations between Miss Jenny and Narcissa in the ghost-filled parlour (S, p. 64), and Old Bayard's visit to the chest of family heirlooms in the attic (S, pp. 85-88). At the beginning of Chapter Five the power of this past to shape the lives of all Sartoris descendants is again indicated: ". . . that arrogant shade [Col. John Sartoris] which dominated the house and the life that went on there and the whole scene itself. . . . as though it were a stage set for the diversion of him whose stubborn dream . . . had shaped itself fine and clear . . ." (S, p. 103).

In the second half of this section the focus of interest shifts again to Young Bayard as his escapades with the high-powered car and the unbroken stallion are narrated. Once again, his character is developed mainly through depiction of his actions. However, some indication of the nature of his thoughts and emotions is also given. In conversation with Rafe MacCallum he again reveals an uneasy sense of guilt associated with his brother's death. MacCallum having introduced the subject by recalling a fox hunt at which both brothers were present, Bayard recapitulates his earlier remarks about Johnny's foolishness and his own helplessness to interfere:

> 'Damn ham-handed Hun,' he said. 'He never could fly, anyway. I kept trying to keep him from going up there on that goddam popgun,' and he cursed his dead brother savagely. . . . 'I kept on trying to keep him from going up there, with that Camel. But he gave me a burst. Right across my nose'" (S, p. 114).

Again it is clear that Bayard's fraternal family past is dominated by an obsession with his brother's death, in connection with which he harbours a tormenting sense of guilt.

One very important clue to Bayard's puzzling responses is to be found in the account he gives MacCallum of his war experiences: ". . . he fell to talking of the war. Not of combat, but rather of a life peopled by young men like fallen angels, and of a meteoric violence like that of fallen angels, beyond heaven or hell and partaking of both: doomed immortality and immortal doom" (S, p. 113). The fallen-angel/meteor image and the inflated language of this passage link it unmistakably with Miss Jenny's account of the career of the Carolina Bayard (see above, pp. 17-18).[17] This obvious parallel in their descriptions is thematically important because it implies that Young Bayard has been influenced by, and has accepted as valid, the attitudes toward soldierly exploits and conduct endorsed by his family's traditions and passed on to him in the legends of his ancestors. Thus Faulkner establishes by implication the direct and powerful influence which the ancestral-parental family past has upon Young Bayard. Furthermore, because this implication is made in connection with the matter of war-time conduct, a link between Bayard's ancestral-parental past and his fraternal past (most often evoked by references to his and Johnny's military service) is also implied.

However, immediately following this allusion to the legendary deeds of previous Sartorises is a passage which, although employing the same often-repeated image, introduces a new element: ". . . Bayard's voice went on, filling the cubbyhole of a room . . . with ghosts of a thing high-pitched as a hysteria, like a glare of fallen meteors on the dark retina of the world" (_S_, p. 113). This "thing high-pitched as a hysteria," whatever it may be, is certainly foreign to the casual, carefree, reckless attitudes of such traditional family heroes as Jeb Stuart and the Carolina Bayard. Thus, although the implication is clear that Bayard has adopted the values and the standard of conduct endorsed by the traditions of his family, it is also clear that his response to the experience of war is not that of a typical Sartoris.

In the remainder of Part II Young Bayard behaves almost, but not quite, as one would expect a Sartoris to behave. On the one hand he displays the recklessness and complete disregard for personal comfort and safety which made heroes of his ancestors. After drinking moonshine in the backroom of a café, he nearly becomes involved in a brawl on his way out, then is injured attempting to ride an unbroken stallion, spends the rest of the day drinking and driving too fast, and finally ends up in jail for the night. From what the reader has been told of the behaviour of Col. John Sartoris and the Carolina Bayard, this could be a typical day in the life of a typical Sartoris. However, on the other hand, Young Bayard reveals an unhappiness and a weariness with life in the midst of these exploits which are in striking contrast to the exuberant enjoyment of danger displayed by his family's heroes. For example, there is some indication that his attempt to ride the unbroken stallion is not so much a celebration of reckless daring as a seeking after his own destruction: when MacCallum is warned that Bayard may be killed by the horse he replies, "'Let him be'. . . . 'That's what he wants'" (S, p. 117). Although it is impossible at this point to determine exactly how close MacCallum may be to the truth, it is significant that Bayard receives neither enjoyment nor satisfaction from his exploits, and clearly does not court danger for the same reasons as his legendary forebears.

A further indication that Young Bayard's reckless actions may be less the result of an enjoyment of danger than of weariness with life appears at the close of Part II as the reader is allowed a brief insight into his thoughts:

> Nothing to be seen, and the long, long span of a man's natural life. Three score and ten years to drag a stubborn body about the world and cozen its insistent demands. Three score and ten, the Bible said. Seventy years. And he was only twenty-six. Not much more than a third through it. Hell (S, p. 138).

This unhappiness clearly sets Young Bayard apart from his family and from his family's tradition, for although to pursue danger and even death is part of the Sartoris code of conduct, to pursue them merely out of weariness with life certainly is not. As one critic has observed, "One might say that it is in the nature of a Sartoris to seek death in his own way. . . . Nevertheless, this Sartoris is run through with an un-Sartorian despair in his quest."[18]

At his first appearance in Part III Young Bayard is described as enjoying "a hiatus that might have been called contentment" (S, p. 170) during the summer. However, although his violence and despair seem to be at least temporarily in abeyance, he is troubled by a recurring nightmare:

> . . . he still waked at times in the peaceful darkness of his room and without previous warning, tense and sweating with old terror. Then, momentarily, the world was laid away and he was a trapped beast in the high blue, mad for life, trapped in the very cunning fabric that had betrayed him who had dared chance too much, and he thought again if, when the bullet found you, you could only crash upward, burst; anything but earth. Not death, no: it was the crash you had to live through so many times before you struck that filled your throat with vomit (S, p. 170).

This nightmare reveals some surprising and important facts about Young Bayard. For the first time the reader becomes aware that his experience of the war was not, after all, the glorious adventure he related to his family and friends upon returning home. In sleep his true feelings emerge and it becomes clear that he lived in constant fear of being shot down by the enemy. The fact that he is terrified of falling and of death is clearly revealed by the description of him as "a trapped beast in the high blue, mad for life." Furthermore, the fact that it is an "old terror" from which he suffers implies that he has been haunted by this nightmare and this fear since his return from the Front. Thus a man who heretofore has apparently feared nothing and been indifferent to all risks is abruptly shown to be terrified of falling and of the destruction which inevitably overtakes "him who had dared chance too much." The nightmare thus reveals striking discrepancies between Young Bayard's relation of his adventures and his actual experience of the war, and between his reckless, apparently fearless actions and his secret, obsessive fears. It is now clear that in spite of his exploits, Young Bayard is not a typical

Sartoris, for although he may be brave, he is not fearless in the manner of his ancestors.

Bayard's "hiatus" proves to be short-lived, for he quickly relapses into a state of despair. He also relapses into violence and is again injured, this time more seriously, in a car accident. He immediately associates his injury with the death of his brother: ". . . this wasn't anything: just a few caved slats. Patch up his fuselage with a little piano wire in ten minutes. Not like Johnny. They [enemy bullets] were all going right into his thighs. Damn butcher wouldn't even raise his sights a little" (S, p. 178). Before a doctor can arrive to bandage his broken ribs, Bayard has collected all of his brother's remaining possessions and burnt them. This action reveals the depth of Bayard's grief and sense of loss; and, more importantly, his association of his injury with Johnny's death implies that his violent, dangerous behaviour is somehow a response to his brother's death, and that his self-destructive despair is in some way a product of his grief.

While recovering from the accident Bayard has another nightmare and reveals part of his suppressed emotions to Narcissa. Again he dreams of being shot down by the enemy, and again is forced to confront the "old terror" he has never escaped. However, this time it is clear that he is tortured by more than the fear of falling and of death, for the expression Narcissa sees in his eyes is not only one of terror, but also of "mad, cold fury, and despair" (S, p. 205). The cause of this fury and despair, which have characterized so many of his thoughts and actions in the novel, is indirectly revealed by the "brutal tale" he tells Narcissa.

Bayard's relation of the circumstances of his brother's death shows that Johnny died with a casual fearlessness reminiscent of the behaviour of the Carolina Bayard:

> 'Then I saw the fire streaking out along his wing, and he was looking back. He wasn't looking at the Hun at all; he was looking at me. The Hun stopped shooting then, and all of us sort of just sat there for a while. I couldn't tell what John was up to until I saw him swing his feet out. Then he thumbed his nose at me like he was always doing and flipped his hand at the Hun and kicked his machine out of the way and jumped' (S, p. 206).

Although Bayard does not describe how he felt as he watched Johnny leap to his death, his wild attempts to dive beneath him are evidence of a sense of desperation so great that he was willing to attempt any means of saving his brother, no matter how dangerous or improbable. Thus Bayard's "fury and despair" seem to result from awareness of his helplessness to save Johnny, yet it is significant that he continues to be tormented by this sense of helplessness, for there was indeed nothing he could have done to save him. Yet he is tormented by it, as is shown by his constant retelling of the circumstances of Johnny's death, as well as by his self-justifying tone in declaring his inability to prevent it.

Bayard's pride is also somehow involved in the matter of his brother's death, for beneath the violence and profanity of his "brutal tale" is "the bitter struggling of his false and stubborn pride" (S, p. 206). This echoes a statement which followed the description of his first nightmare: ". . . he discovered pride again" (S, p. 170). The only fact revealed by these nightmares which could be damaging to Bayard's pride is his consciousness that he was, and is, terrified of falling and of death. Furthermore, Bayard's juxtaposition of his own terror (revealed by the nightmare) with Johnny's fearlessness (revealed by his casual manner of leaping from the airplane) implies that he is aware of the contrast between himself and his brother.

At this point I think it is necessary to review the development of the theme of "family past" thus far in order to see what conclusions can reasonably be drawn from the implications which have been made regarding Bayard's responses to the fraternal and parental-ancestral aspects of his family past. The novel began by establishing the "sense of Sartoris as a way of life" through description of the values, traditions, and legends of the Sartoris family, the outstanding feature of which is a reckless and utterly fearless daring on the part of Sartoris males. The degree of influence which the Sartoris tradition is shown to have upon the lives of Old Bayard and Miss Jenny suggests that their descendants will also model their lives upon it. When the protagonist, Young Bayard, is at last introduced, the way in which he glorifies his war-time exploits and his obvious pride in avenging the death of his brother suggest that he is indeed heir to the Sartoris traditions and values. However, he suffers from a nagging sense of guilt associated with his brother's death. Also, although he shows that he shares the family's values by relating his war experiences in the same terms in which Miss Jenny described the exploits of a family hero, a note of hysteria creeps into his account. Young Bayard seizes every opportunity to display his daring, yet seems to receive no satisfaction from facing and overcoming danger. His association of his car accident with the air battle in which Johnny died suggests that in some way his compulsion to risk his life at every opportunity is an outcome of the death of his brother. Finally, his nightmares reveal that he was, and is, terrified of falling and of death, in contrast to his brother, who leaped to an almost certain destruction with all the impudent fearlessness of his ancestors.

It should be obvious from this summary that there is one point at which all of these lines of thematic development converge, and that point is the question of courage. On the basis of the evidence presented so far, the reader can assume what the text has strongly implied: that Young Bayard accepts his family's definition of courage as the fearless recklessness displayed by his brother and his ancestors, and, knowing himself to be afraid of death, believes that he is a coward. Bayard's ancestors were heroes precisely because their exploits proved that they were completely without fear; therefore, if Bayard has accepted his family's values and standards of behaviour, he must also believe that a Sartoris who is afraid of anything is not a Sartoris. In short, Bayard feels himself unworthy of, yet compelled to uphold, the heroic tradition of his family, and all of his thoughts and actions form part of this response to his family's past.

It is Bayard's uneasy consciousness of his own fears which has led him to transform his actual experience of the war into a modern version of the tales of heroic deeds upon which he was raised. However, he cannot quite suppress the note of hysteria produced by the memory of his terror. Bayard's awareness of his fears also compells him to risk his life repeatedly in order to prove that he is indeed fearless; yet, because he cannot convince *himself* of his fearlessness, he derives no comfort or satisfaction from his acts of daring and must seek ever more dangerous stunts to perform. As James Watson points out, Bayard's four major attempts to prove his fearlessness are patterned upon the exploits of his brother and his ancestors:

> . . . Bayard's wild ride on the stallion recalls Carolina Bayard's reckless cavalry charge. . . . he wrecks his car on July 3, only two days before the anniversary of Johnny's death on July 5. . . . Bayard's third accident results in the death of his grandfather

> and is set below the cemetery in which 'directly above them John Sartoris' effigy lifted its florid stone gesture.' . . . His death in the test plane is [a] precise duplication of Johnny's death. . . .[19]

In spite of these attempts to equal the daring of his family's heroes, Bayard continues to feel unworthy of the heroic tradition in which he has been raised. Thus it is clear that Bayard's despair and weariness with life result not only from the death of his twin brother, but also from his failure to convince himself that he is, after all, worthy of the name of Sartoris. As one critic has aptly described his dilemma, "The root of Bayard's anguish is a fear and uncertainty of his own courage so profound that he finds himself driven by it to prove over and over again that he is in fact what he fears he is not: a Sartoris."[20]

Bayard's inner conflict is intensified by the fact that his twin brother clearly possessed the absolute fearlessness which his family acclaims as the ideal of courage. After witnessing his brother's casual manner of facing death, Bayard "cannot believe that he too is brave, can as easily and gracefully fulfill the demands of the Sartoris myth as did Johnny."[21] His admiration for and envy of Johnny cause him to be obsessed with memories of his brother, and, in thinking and speaking of him, to vacillate between praise and belittlement, love and hatred. Furthermore, it is no coincidence that Bayard associates the injuries he receives in his car accident with Johnny's death (see above, p. 27), for his courting of danger is clearly a deliberate attempt to prove that his daring is equal to his brother's. Cleanth Brooks observes:

> Johnny's way of accepting his death was indeed a hard act to have to follow. Bayard, his memory etched by the sight of his brother kicking the plane aside and jumping, is obsessed by the idea of falling. . . . Because he is terrified of falling to his death, and yet still more terrified that he may not live up to the Sartoris standard of heroism, Bayard must prove himself over and over again. . . .[22]

Thus it is not surprising that in describing Johnny's final exploit Bayard must struggle with "his false and stubborn pride": pride which is "false" because it is based on a distorted perception of his own and Johnny's relative merits, and "stubborn" because he is determined to prove that he too is fearless.

One problem yet remains unsolved: Bayard's seemingly irrational and groundless sense of guilt. In view of the intensity with which he seeks to prove his daring, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Bayard has an uneasy feeling that if he had been truly fearless that day in France, he would somehow have been able to prevent the disaster, even though his common sense tells him that there was nothing he could have done to save his brother. However, there is some indication that Bayard's guilt may have another source as well. Early in the novel Miss Jenny remarks to Narcissa, "'John at least had consideration enough . . . not to come back and worry everybody to distraction'" (S, p. 59), and later she tells Bayard, "'At least he [the Carolina Bayard] got himself decently killed'. . . . 'He did more with a horse than you could do with that aeroplane'" (S, p. 190). Although Miss Jenny seldom intends her scathing remarks to be taken literally, these comments do emphasize the fact that according to the family's tradition a Sartoris either comes home a hero or does not come home at all. It is therefore quite possible that Bayard feels guilty about the very fact of having survived the war, especially since he returned home without medals and without his brother. Thus his sense of guilt may seem irrational, yet be perfectly consistent with his response to his family's past.

It is my opinion that, on the basis of what is stated and implied by the text, all of these conclusions can reasonably be drawn by the reader. Of course, it is true that all of them depend upon one assumption of central importance for which the reader has no direct evidence: that Young Bayard is influenced by his ancestral-parental family past to the point of unquestioningly adopting its values and principles of conduct as his own. However, as I have shown, such an influence is strongly implied, both in particular (Young Bayard's descriptions of his war experiences echo the legends of his heroic ancestors) and in general (Young Bayard's actions are set in the context of a heroic family tradition established at the beginning of the novel and maintained throughout). Furthermore, that Bayard is convinced of his own cowardice and unworthiness seems to me the only possible explanation of his obsession with the circumstances of his brother's death, his ambivalent attitude toward Johnny, and his constant compulsion to prove his own fearlessness. In short, these conclusions take into account all of the evidence of the text, both direct and implicit, and make of the development of the theme of "family past" a complete and meaningful whole.

However, it is important to keep in mind the gap which exists between what is stated or clearly implied by the text, and what the reader can reasonably assume and conclude from it. To a certain extent, the reader must re-create the story of Bayard Sartoris for himself, although, as my examination of the text has shown, sufficient evidence is provided to enable him to do so. That this is the case is largely due to the author's handling of point of view and characterization. Although writing in the omniscient narrative voice, Faulkner allows the reader only a few, highly selective insights into the mind of the protagonist. As I have shown, Young Bayard is largely characterized through his actions, and the reader is frequently forced to make assumptions about his thoughts and feelings simply because he has been told so little about them. Furthermore, in the first three parts of the novel the narrative focus is upon Bayard for only brief intervals, and even then he is often depicted from the viewpoint of another character. For example, his second nightmare and the story following it (S, pp. 205-207), which are extremely important thematically, are related from Narcissa's point of view. As a result of these factors, it is not until the end of Part III that the reader has sufficient evidence to be able to define the relationship between Bayard's fraternal past and his ancestral-parental past and to grasp the whole of his complex pattern of response to these influences.

It is only in the last three chapters of Part IV that the narrative focus is upon Young Bayard for an extended period of time and events are related primarily through his consciousness. The most obvious thematic link between this section and the rest of Bayard's story is a concern with the question of courage. When Bayard realizes that he is ashamed to admit to his friends that his reckless driving indirectly caused his grandfather's death, he is for the first time led to criticize his own behaviour, and ". . . for an instant he saw the recent months of his life coldly in all their headlong and heedless wastefulness . . ." (S, p. 251). He realizes that, whatever his courage may or may not be in the physical sense, his flight following his grandfather's death marks him as a coward in the moral sense, and he accuses himself: "You were afraid to go home. You made a nigger sneak your horse out to you. You, who deliberately do things your judgement tells you may not be successful, even possible, are afraid to face the consequences of your own acts" (S, p. 251). This is the only point in the novel at which Bayard is shown to reflect upon the nature of courage. It is also the point at which he seems to be approaching an understanding of his problem, for he has finally realized that physical daring is not in itself a proof of courage. Unfortunately, rather than being led to question his family's definition of courage, Bayard only becomes more firmly convinced that he is a hopeless coward.

Bayard's moment of self-perception is immediately followed by a statement which is highly ambiguous: "Then again something bitter and deep and sleepless in him blazed out in vindication and justification and accusation; what, he knew not, blazing out at what, Whom, he did not know: You did it! You caused it all; you killed Johnny" (S, p. 251). Critical opinion seems to be about equally divided upon whether this statement is a self-accusation or a denial of all responsibility. Of those inclined to the latter view, James Watson takes the most extreme position by asserting that Bayard not only decides he is innocent of Johnny's death, but condemns his family's heroic tradition as a destructive influence which has ruined his life and his brother's: "If the 'You' to whom he addresses himself is seen as the Sartoris legend . . . the paradox which has governed Bayard's life is here tragically resolved. He realizes the destructiveness of the legend only when, by re-enacting it, he has effectively destroyed himself."[23] However, I do not see how this conclusion can reasonably be made on the basis of the evidence; Bayard's outburst is, after all, "what, he knew not, blazing out at what, Whom, he did not know" (my emphasis). The ambiguity of the statement reflects Bayard's conflicting feelings about Johnny's death, which have caused him to vacillate between guilt and self-justification throughout the novel. Although it is tempting to try to see this passage as in some way a resolution of Bayard's doubt and uncertainty, it is clear that he still feels guilty about Johnny's death and is still trying to find somewhere else to direct the blame, though "at what, Whom, he did not know."

The whole question of Bayard's courage and his response to his family's heroic tradition is also explored indirectly in these chapters by means of an implied comparison between Bayard and Buddy MacCallum. Buddy's description of the war is hardly a glorious tale of "young men like fallen angels"; instead it conveys "an impression of people, creatures without initiative or background or future, caught timelessly in a maze of solitary conflicting preoccupations, like bumping tops, against an imminent but incomprehensible nightmare" (S, p. 257). It is ironic that Buddy, having no heroic tradition to live up to, is the one who has been decorated for heroism. It is even more ironic that, because of his father's disapproval, Buddy must hide his medal and avoid all mention of his military exploits, while in Bayard's case these things would be the chief source of his family's pride, and of his. Like Bayard, Buddy is expected by his family to "perpetuate the name" (S, p. 268), yet, unlike Bayard, he has so far been able to live up to his family's expectations.

Remorse at his grandfather's death and the conviction that he is a moral coward for fleeing his responsibilities increase Bayard's despair and loneliness. As usual, the death of his brother is the focal point of his suffering. When Buddy mentions having read of Johnny's death, Bayard immediately feels weighted down, oppressed, unable to breathe. This sense of oppression becomes so intense that he feels as if there is someone or something in the room using up all the air. Again he relives the events leading up to Johnny's death, and in his anguish wonders if perhaps he was himself killed as well: "That would account for it, would explain so much; that he too was dead and this was hell, through which he moved for ever and ever with an illusion of quickness, seeking his brother who in turn was somewhere seeking him, never the two to meet" (S, p. 258).

When, during his first night at the MacCallum farm, Bayard gets up to go outside and finds a gun leaning against the wall beside the door, he picks it up and recalls the location of a box of shells; the implication that he is considering suicide is supported by his perception a moment later of his body as a "dead envelope" (S, p. 259). Bayard has now reached such a pitch of despair that he feels himself to be in a state of living death, and is on the verge of suicide. He is still unable to come to terms with his brother's death, and, because of the circumstances surrounding Old Bayard's death, his sense of guilt has doubled and he is more than ever convinced of his own cowardice and unworthiness. It is clear that for Bayard there is no way out.

At the point at which Bayard leaves the MacCallum farm he begins to recede once more from the reader's vision. In the remainder of Part IV the distance between narrator and protagonist and between protagonist and reader steadily increases until Bayard is once again depicted only through his actions. Although no further insights into his thoughts and feelings are provided, his reason for deciding to fly the experimental plane in which he is finally killed is clear to the reader, for the inventor of the plane has implied that he is a coward if he refuses (S, p. 289). It is thus hardly an exaggeration to say that in the end Bayard Sartoris is completely destroyed by his response to his family's past.

* * * * *

In conclusion, my examination of the text has shown that the most serious weaknesses in the development of the theme of "family past" in this novel result from the way in which the crucial link between Bayard's fraternal past and his ancestral-parental past is established by implication only. Throughout the novel Bayard's responses to his family's tradition and the extent to which it influences his life are hinted at, but never explicitly defined. In fact, that he does indeed respond to his ancestral-parental past is only implied. Even when the author focuses upon Bayard's responses for an extended period of time, as in Chapters Three to Five of Part IV, the protagonist's underlying beliefs and attitudes are not explicitly revealed to the reader. As a result of this implicit method much thematic emphasis is lost, for although it is possible for the reader to deduce the cause of Bayard's responses, the profound influence of his family's heroic tradition upon his relationship with his brother and upon his life as a whole must necessarily remain unexpressed and in the background of the novel.

The implicit method also weakens the characterization of the novel's protagonist. Throughout the first three parts of the novel the reader is allowed only brief glimpses of Young Bayard's inner state, and it is not until the end of the third part that he is given enough clues to enable him to discover the underlying cause of Bayard's bizarre conduct. As a result, for more than two-thirds of the novel Young Bayard is to the reader a strangely despairing and self-destructive individual with whom it is difficult to sympathize. The detachment with which Faulkner as omniscient narrator portrays the protagonist for the major part of the novel, while in keeping with the implicit method of thematic development, diminishes the impact of Young Bayard's dilemma upon the reader.

I do not mean to imply that I believe the development of a theme should always be thoroughly explicit and completely straightforward; however, it seems to me obvious that a predominantly implicit method of thematic development requires extremely skilful handling if it is to be effective. When William Faulkner wrote Sartoris he simply had not achieved the degree of skill necessary to make the development of the theme of "family past" in the novel as effective as it might have been. However, as we shall see, Sartoris was for Faulkner a very important beginning.

CHAPTER III

In Faulkner's fourth novel, The Sound and the Fury, "family past" is again an important theme. Its pattern of development is, however, quite different from that in the more conventional novel, Sartoris. The Sound and the Fury is composed of four sections and an appendix, with the theme of "family past" developed extensively in only one section, the second. This concentration of the thematic development in the second quarter of the novel is due to the fact that it is the narrator of the second section, Quentin Compson, upon whom the family's past has by far the greatest influence. However, the novel's other major characters are also, though to a lesser degree, influenced by the family's past, with the result that the theme is developed to a lesser extent in the other three sections as well. For this reason I will briefly consider each of the other major characters in his relationship to the family's past before beginning an analysis of Quentin's more complex responses.

A character's family past may influence him in three ways: by shaping his sense of identity, by altering his opinion of his own worth, and by dictating a pattern of behaviour in response to present realities. The characters who are most profoundly influenced by their families' pasts are those who are influenced in all of these ways. As my examination of the text will show, Quentin is one such character. The novel's other major characters, however, are influenced in only one, or at most two, of these ways. Benjy and Dilsey, for example, are influenced by the Compson family past only insofar as their behaviour is concerned.

As a result of his severely limited intellectual capacity, Benjy's responses to the family's past are by far the simplest. Although a considerable part of his behaviour results from his remembrance of past events, it is ludicrous to imagine the family's past influencing the way in which Benjy sees himself. In fact, it is doubtful if Benjy's awareness of self is developed to the point where it can even be called a sense of identity, much less a feeling of self-worth. Therefore in the first section of the novel, which Benjy narrates, the theme of "family past" is developed at the level of depiction of past events without comment upon them, as this is the only way in which Benjy can recall the past.

The influence of the family's past upon Dilsey is limited to her behaviour not because of any intellectual shortcoming, but because she is the one major character who is not part of the family. Although Dilsey's knowledge of the Compson family past influences the way she feels about and acts toward the other characters (witness her kindness toward the illegitimate Miss Quentin), her view of herself can hardly be affected, as she belongs to a different family, social class, and race. Therefore in the fourth section, which is narrated from the omniscient point of view with the focus upon Dilsey, the theme of "family past" is also developed through depiction of events, although at a more sophisticated level than in Benjy's section, for the omniscient narrator can comment upon those events and make comparisons between past and present.

Jason, the narrator of the third section, is influenced by his family's past with regard to his behaviour and, to a minor extent, his sense of identity. Feeling he has been cheated by Caddy and taken advantage of by his family as a whole, Jason's behaviour reflects a grudging sense of duty toward his mother and brother, and angry resentment [illegible] his sister and niece. His sense of identity is affected in that he sees himself as a wronged man, cheated of what should have been his due. However, his nature is far too self-righteous and aggressive for his sense of self-worth to be affected by the family's past or present. Thus the third section of the novel develops the theme of "family past" by portraying a character who has responded to his family's past, not with confusion, disappointment, or self-doubt, but by adopting the single, compelling purpose of avenging the wrong he imagines his family, and particularly his sister, has done him.

The novel's other two major characters, Caddy and her daughter, Miss Quentin, do not appear as narrators and are portrayed mainly from the viewpoints of the other characters. As a result, it is very difficult to define the extent to which they are influenced by the family's past. Clearly, certain aspects of their behaviour, particularly their rebelliousness against family authority, are somehow the result of their responses to the family's past. It is also probable that both are to some degree influenced insofar as their estimations of their own worth are concerned, for both declare that they are "bad" after violating their family's rules of conduct. However, it is impossible to tell if Caddy's and Miss Quentin's senses of personal identity are influenced by their family's past, for the reader views these characters from the outside only, and is not allowed access to their thoughts and feelings.

In short, none of the other major characters is influenced by the family's past to the extent that his sense of identity, feeling of self-worth, and pattern of response to present realities are shaped by it. I will therefore devote the remainder of this chapter to examination of the portions of the novel which portray Quentin's responses, for it is here that the fullest development of the theme of "family past" occurs.

* * * * *

Because Quentin's section is narrated from the first-person point of view, the reader is allowed constant direct access to his mind. As a result, his responses to the fraternal and parental aspects of his family's past are more immediately and clearly apparent to the reader than those of Young Bayard. The central question about Quentin's responses is thus not *if* he responds, nor *how* he responds, but why he responds as he does. His responses are certainly remarkable in that they are based upon a very complex and elaborate system of thought. In the course of his narration it gradually becomes clear that Quentin has formulated for himself an idealistic code of family honour, female virtue, and chivalric conduct. Like Young Bayard, his primary concern is with proper behaviour, and, also like Young Bayard, his definition of what constitutes proper behaviour can ultimately be seen to arise from his response to his ancestral family past. Again in *The Sound and the Fury*, the full significance of the pattern of behaviour to which the individual tries to force his experience to conform only gradually becomes clear as his responses are portrayed. Again also, the importance of the individual's response to his ancestral family past is implied, but not directly stated, in the novel proper. However, in the Appendix to *The Sound and the Fury* the role played by the ancestral family past in Quentin's responses is made clear. Thus it can ultimately be seen that it is the combined influences of all three aspects of Quentin's family past which have produced the extraordinary pattern of response with which he attempts to deal with his experience.

Perhaps because this close interaction of fraternal, parental, and ancestral pasts becomes apparent only when the Appendix is taken into consideration, many critics have failed to appreciate the thematic unity of Quentin's section. As a result, they tend to emphasize one aspect of his family past and underestimate the importance of the others. Much critical comment upon Quentin's responses seeks to explain them either entirely in terms of his relationship with his parents, or entirely in terms of his relationship with his sister, Caddy. Fortunately, there are also a few critics who have recognized the greater complexity of Quentin's pattern of response, and who have attempted to analyze the ways in which he is influenced by each of the three aspects of his family past.

Cleanth Brooks belongs to that first group of critics who seek to account for all of Quentin's responses in terms of his unsatisfactory relationship with his parents. Brooks describes Caroline Compson, the "cold and self-centered mother," as a "weight of negativity which paralyzes the normal family relationships."[1] Although recognizing the negative effects of Jason Compson's cynicism, Brooks defends him as showing far more concern and affection for his children. It is primarily the failure of Quentin's mother, Brooks concludes, which has caused Quentin's inability to deal with reality.

Also of this first group, Mark Spilka agrees with Brooks about the importance of parental failures, but places the largest share of blame on Quentin's father: ". . . it is his father . . . who dominates his imagination, who tests and undercuts his motives, and who finally determines his suicide."[2] Spilka maintains that it is Jason Compson's nihilistic attitude which forces Quentin to respond as he does. His father's refusal to acknowledge meaning and value in life, Spilka concludes, leaves Quentin no alternative except self-destruction: "What Quentin seeks from his father, then, and what he cannot get, is a sanction for the sheer possibility of values which no action of his own provides; and his tragedy is to defy his father's authority, to become 'the arbiter of his own virtues,' through suicide itself."[3]

Kenneth Richardson takes yet another stance by holding both parents to blame and condemning both with equal severity. Of Quentin's father he declares, "Through ridicule and satire Mr. Compson destroys all hope in his son."[4] According to Richardson, Jason Compson is a completely selfish and unfeeling man who is unwilling to share anything of himself with his children. Of Quentin's mother he remarks, "Caroline Compson is a woman totally blinded by her all-encompassing self-interest."[5] To this self-interest, Richardson argues, have been sacrificed her children's needs for affection and guidance. On this basis, Richardson concludes that it is the selfish refusals of both Jason and Caroline Compson to fulfill their parental roles which determine Quentin's responses.

It is my opinion that Richardson takes too one-sided a view in holding Quentin's parents so completely to blame, for by doing so he implies that Quentin himself is not responsible for his own actions and attitudes. Apart from this, the observations of these three critics are generally correct in that his father's nihilism and his mother's selfishness do indeed contribute to Quentin's suicidal despair. The error made by all three is not so much an error in fact as an error in emphasis: Quentin's unsatisfactory relationship with his parents is one important factor contributing to his despair, but not the only important factor.

The critics of the second group make a similar error in emphasis by maintaining that it is Quentin's unsatisfactory relationship with

Caddy which produces his moral and spiritual malaise. Of this group, André Bleikasten argues that Quentin is suffering from a suppressed incestuous attraction to his sister. Noting Mrs. Compson's failure to provide the mother-love her children need, Bleikasten theorizes that Quentin has transferred all of his frustrated emotions and unfulfilled longings to Caddy. He argues that Caddy's virginity is of paramount importance to Quentin, not because it represents in his mind the family's honour, but because it ensures "the absolute mutuality of a dual relationship. Innocence to him is a means rather than an end. . . . if he distrusts sexuality and recoils from it, it is primarily because it imperils his exclusive bond to his sister."[6] Bleikasten concludes that Quentin is driven to despair and suicide by jealousy of Caddy's lovers combined with guilt about his own incestuous desires.

Although I do not deny that his relationship with his sister at times takes on incestuous overtones, I feel it is a mistake to reduce Quentin's complex pattern of thought and response to a case of sexual maladjustment. Bleikasten largely ignores the existence of the elaborate system of ethics which emerges as the governing principle in Quentin's responses, merely remarking that as a Southerner, Quentin is heir to a long-outdated code of aristocratic and puritanical ideals. Furthermore, Bleikasten takes the parental influence into account only insofar as to theorize that the failures of Quentin's parents to fulfill traditional roles have increased his tendency toward incestuous obsession. With regard to the ancestral family past, Bleikasten attempts to argue that both Quentin and his father are oppressed by the influence of their ancestor, Quentin MacLachan Compson, in much the same way as the Sartoris family is overshadowed by the powerful figure of Col. John Sartoris. For this assertion, however, I am convinced that there is not the slightest evidence in either the novel or the Appendix.[7]

Olga Vickery, another member of this second group, also maintains that the crux of Quentin's dilemma is to be found in his relationship with his sister. Vickery, however, recognizes that the failure of this relationship is doubly important in that it entails the failure of Quentin's code of ethics:

> He has, in short, separated ethics from the total context of humanity. Insofar as virginity is a concept, associated with virtue and honor, it becomes the center of Quentin's world, and since it is also physically present in Caddy, it forms a precarious link between his world and that of experience.[8]

Vickery concludes that Quentin has "rejected the life around him as insufficiently meaningful"[9] and set up in its place a rigid ethical order to which he tries to force his experience to conform. These comments are very much to the point, and it is unfortunate that they are rather limited in extent. Vickery makes no attempt to explore the influence of the ancestral family past upon Quentin's ethical order, nor does she take into account the possible influence of his parents upon him.

In contrast to these two groups, John Hunt is one critic who tries to take into account the influence of all three aspects of the family's past upon Quentin. Hunt points out that the Appendix helps to make clear how and why Quentin has formulated the elaborate code of ethics with which he tries to order and control his experience:

> The Appendix tells us that the Compson past, for all the doom and defeat to be found there, contains something of real worth, embodies a "truth" which is still of value. It is a history of decay and degeneration, indicating negatively if in no other way that there was a time when men were secure in a trust in their own humanity.[10]

It is this "something of real worth" in his ancestral family past which, Hunt argues, Quentin is trying to preserve by means of a rigid code of honourable and ethical behaviour. However, as Hunt points out, Quentin's code is unrealistic and oppressive because he has grasped only the "talismans" and "fetishes" of a bygone tradition, without possessing a sympathetic understanding of human strengths and weaknesses. Due to the inhumanness and rigidity of his code of behaviour, Quentin cannot accept the shortcomings of the present, and the failures of his parents and Caddy to fulfill the preconceived roles he has assigned them pushes him to the point of suicidal desperation. Thus Hunt's conclusions support my assertion that Quentin's ethical order has come into being as a result of the combined influences of all three aspects of his family past, and that this order in turn governs his responses to present realities.

The part of Hunt's argument to which I take exception is his dismissal of the Appendix as "of interest chiefly in the Yoknapatawpha legend and not crucial to the novel itself."[11] Hunt is certainly correct in maintaining that it is not the specific details of the ancestral past, but rather "the values for which in his own mind the family stood"[12] which form the basis of Quentin's code of ethics. However, it is my opinion that the role of the ancestral family past in the formation of his code --and thus the close interaction of all three influences upon him--only become clear in the light of the additional information provided by the Appendix. Therefore, I will follow my examination of Quentin's section with an analysis of the Appendix in order to demonstrate how it contributes to the development of the theme of "family past."

* * * * *

Quentin's section consists almost entirely of his thoughts and memories on the last day of his life, with only a few brief intrusions of external reality into his consciousness.[13] These thoughts and memories do not unfold in anything approaching chronological order; rather, Quentin's mind shifts rapidly and constantly back and forth between different aspects of his past and present, almost all of which are in some way related to his family. The obsessions which dictate his responses to his family past are thus not gradually revealed to the reader, but are almost immediately apparent from the constant recurrence of particular thoughts and memories. It is the intensity of Quentin's emotions and the complexity of the ethical order governing his responses which gradually become clear in the course of the section. For this reason, the full significance of Quentin's memories and his responses to them can only be grasped if his thoughts are examined in the order in which they are presented to the reader. I will therefore consider Quentin's thoughts and memories of his family past in this order and attempt to determine the significance of each. For the sake of convenience I have arbitrarily divided the section into seven parts, each of which portrays Quentin's musings up to a point at which his thoughts are interrupted by a prolonged contact with another person. The first of these parts encompasses the time between his awakening and his visit to the jeweller.

Quentin's first thoughts upon awakening reveal a preoccupation with his family past, as he recalls his father's words on the occasion of his receiving from him a family heirloom, his grandfather's watch. His memory of this event also suggests the nature of his father's influence upon him, as Mr. Compson's cynical remarks about the watch and about life in general are related:

> . . . he said, Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excrutiating-ly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's. . . . Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought. The field only reveals to man his own folly and despair, and victory is an illusion of philosophers and fools.[14]

This opening passage is significant in that it sets forth the doctrine of the absurdity of human life, the futility of human endeavour, and the insignificance of human values in defiance of which Quentin will be shown to have formulated his own doctrine of meaning and significance through ethical behaviour. Furthermore, the extent to which Quentin has been influenced by his father is indicated by the frequency with which he quotes his father's opinions (the phrases "Father said" and "he said" occurring half a dozen times within the first two pages of Quentin's section).

Another important fact which emerges from the opening pages of the section is Quentin's preoccupation with his sister. The intensity of this preoccupation is first indicated by his association of "sister" with ideas to which it bears no direct relation: "the good Saint Francis that said Little Sister Death, that never had a sister. . . . Christ. . . . had no sister" (SF, p. 94). Even an observation about the weather becomes associated with "[t]he month of brides," and thus with the memory of his sister as a bride: "She ran right out of the mirror, out of the banked scent" (SF, p. 95). His thoughts then quickly progress by association through a remembrance of the wedding announcement to the heart of his obsession: "Roses. Not virgins like dogwood, milkweed. I said I have committed incest, Father I said" (SF, p. 95). Thus the pattern which Quentin's obsessed mind will follow throughout the section is established, as his thoughts return constantly--seemingly inevitably --to the key issues of Caddy's loss of virginity, her hasty marriage to preserve appearances, and his own attempt to transform her promiscuity into incest.

As Quentin's thoughts and memories unfold it becomes increasingly clear that he has attached an abstract principle, which is to him of great importance, to the physical circumstance of his sister's virginity. That Caddy's virtue is in his mind equated with his family's honour is indicated by the fact that he is extremely apprehensive that her transgression will become a matter of public knowledge and comment: "Jesus and Saint Francis talking about his sister. Because if it were just to hell; if that were all of it. Finished. If things just finished themselves. Nobody else there but her and me. If we could just have done something so dreadful that they would have fled hell except us" (SF, p. 97). It is obvious that Quentin thinks in extremes: to him the loss of virginity is of sufficient importance to merit eternal damnation. However, it is also obvious that the hell of which he is most afraid is that which public opinion can create.

Quentin's solution is equally extreme: "I have committed incest I said Father it was I it was not Dalton Ames" (SF, pp. 97-98). His confession of incest is clearly intended to be the "something so dreadful" that will transform Caddy's dishonour into an enormity which will be beyond the range even of public censure. However, it is also clear that Quentin's confession is false and that Caddy has in fact lost her virginity to Dalton Ames; shortly afterward, Quentin declares that if he had been Ames' mother he would have prevented his conception. The intensity of this hatred for Ames, together with his horror of public opinion and the excessive importance he attaches to his sister's virginity, are indications of a mind trapped in a rigid pattern of perception and response. His refusal--perhaps his inability--to break free of this pattern is dramatically revealed by the fantasy of committing suicide with which he refutes his father's contention that ". . . people cannot do anything that dreadful they cannot do anything very dreadful at all they cannot even remember tomorrow what seemed dreadful today" (SF, p. 98). Quentin is perversely determined to emphasize the importance of Caddy's loss of virginity, even if he must do so by means of pretended incest and/or suicide. Thus in this first part of the section, Quentin's response to his fraternal family past is shown to consist in an obsessive concern with honour and virtue arising from a rigidly-held code of behaviour.

The second part of Quentin's section contains further indications as to the nature of his response to his fraternal family past. At the beginning of this part Quentin stands on a bridge watching an acquaintance, Gerald Bland, rowing on the river. This is the first of many occasions on which he associates Gerald with Dalton Ames. As he watches the boat disappear he recalls his confrontation with Ames, which also occurred on a bridge over a river: "Did you ever have a sister? No but they're all bitches. Did you ever have a sister? One minute she was. Bitches. Not bitch one minute she stood in the door Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames" (SF, p. 113). A contradiction present in Quentin's thoughts is evidence of an inner conflict, for although he refuses to accept Ames' classification of women as "all bitches," his attitude toward Caddy's sexual behaviour suggests that he too sees her in this light: "Why wont you bring him to the house, Caddy? Why must you do like nigger women do in the pasture the ditches the dark woods hot hidden furious in the dark woods" (*SF*, pp. 113-114). Then, as if the thought of Caddy's promiscuity is too painful for him, his mind veers off to the memory of one of Caddy's early boyfriends, whom he describes as a "pimple-faced infant" (*SF*, p. 114).

In this part of Quentin's section it becomes apparent that he feels a great deal of hostility toward all of Caddy's suitors, including the man she has eventually married. He recalls his first impression of Herbert Head as "[h]earty, celluloid like a drummer. Face full of teeth white but not smiling" (*SF*, p. 114). Again he recalls the words of the wedding announcement, which he apparently received but refused to open. His disapproval of Caddy's hasty marriage and his keen sense of the disgrace surrounding it are revealed by his description of the announcement as a sort of obscene bier: "*It lay on the table a candle burning at each corner upon the envelope tied in a soiled pink garter two artificial flowers*" (*SF*, p. 115). The combination of the images of sexuality, dirt, artificiality, and death reveals his disgust at Caddy's behaviour, his perception of the falseness of her situation, and his sense of the finality of what she has done in yielding to Ames and of what she is doing in marrying Herbert.

However, a contradiction is again apparent in Quentin's responses, for he deeply resented a disparaging remark about Caddy's reason for marrying so hastily; in response to Shreve's taunt, "These country girls. You cant even tell about them, can you," he makes a resolve to "*Not hit a man in glasses*" (*SF*, p. 115). It is clear that, whatever private opinions he may have on the subject, Quentin will publicly defend his sister's honour against all detractors. Thus Quentin's response to his fraternal family past has produced an inner conflict between his chivalric ideals and his puritanical moralism, both of which are part of his rigid code of ethics.

Quentin's parental family past is also explored in this second part of the section, as the influence of his mother is revealed. Caroline Compson's self-righteousness and self-pity are predominant in Quentin's memory of her conversation with Herbert: "Dont ask Quentin he and Mr. Compson both feel a little insulted when I am strong enough to come down to the table I am going on nerve now I'll pay for it after it's all over and you have taken my little daughter away from me" (_SF_, p. 117). Herbert's blatant flattery of Mrs. Compson causes Quentin to remember her constant self-pitying hypochondria: "_A face reproachful tearful an odour of camphor and of tears a voice weeping steadily and softly beyond the twilit door_ . . ." (_SF_, p. 117).

In addition to disgust at her selfishness and self-pity, Quentin's thoughts also reveal a conviction that his mother is partly to blame for Caddy's situation. Quentin feels that his mother has "sold" Caddy to Herbert in exchange for his money, his flattery, and his promise of a job for her favourite child, Jason. Recalling his mother's strict disapproval of one of Caddy's early boyfriends, Quentin compares it with her attitude toward Herbert: "Yet any blackguard . . . that could drive up in a limousine with a flower in his buttonhole. _Harvard. Quentin this is Herbert. My Harvard boy. Herbert will be a big brother has already promised Jason a position in the bank_" (_SF_, p. 114). Quentin is revolted by his mother's suggestion that Herbert, of whom he thoroughly disapproves, will be a "brother" to him. He is equally revolted by the deliberate strategy with which she has secured a husband for her pregnant daughter; later he remembers that she agreed to the holiday in French Lick with the speculative remark, "maybe I could find a husband for her" (SF, p. 126). His perception of his mother's acceptance of Herbert as arising from self-interest and moral expediency is summed up in the statement, "My little sister had no. If I could say Mother. Mother" (SF, p. 117).

Just as Mrs. Compson has failed with regard to Caddy, so she fails to understand and support Quentin. He is deeply hurt that she should suspect him of spying upon his sister, and protests, "I wouldn't have I wouldn't have. . . . why did she. . . . think I would have could have" (SF, p. 118). Although Quentin's father declares that he knows Quentin would not spy upon Caddy, his cynical description of women as possessing "a practical fertility of suspicion . . . an affinity for evil for supplying whatever the evil lacks in itself" (SF, p. 119), can obviously be of little comfort to him. Clearly, Quentin receives no support from either of his parents, as one has no understanding whatsoever of his ideals and principles, and the other constantly undercuts them with cynicism. It is easy to see how he has adopted a rigid code of ethics partly in response to what he perceives as the moral vacuum in which his parents live. Thus the dominant tone of his response to his parental family past is one of defiance.

In the third part of the section Quentin continues to dwell upon his parental family past, and particularly upon his mother's reaction to Caddy's pregnancy. The ancestral past also plays a minor role here in that Quentin sees his mother's resentful attitude as partly arising from her consciousness of the different social positions of the Compsons and the Bascombs; he asks his father, "do you think so because one of our forefathers was a governor and three were generals and Mother's weren't"

(SF, p. 125). His father replies that "any live man is better than any dead man but no live or dead man is very much better than any other live or dead man" (SF, p. 125), but it is clear that Quentin's mother does not share this view. As Kenneth Richardson points out, "Quentin further realizes that his mother's false pride poisoned the family . . . 'Done in Mother's mind though. Finished. Finished. Then we were all poisoned.'"[15] Mrs. Compson's attitude is shown to have been doubly injurious to her family in that she has lavished all the mother-love of which she is capable upon Jason, who she declares is a Bascomb, while rejecting her other three children as Compsons: "the others dont love me they have never loved anything with that streak of Compson selfishness and false pride Jason was the only one my heart went out to without dread" (SF, p. 126).

With habitual self-righteousness and self-pity, Mrs. Compson views Caddy's situation as an injury to herself and an affront to her family background: "I see now that I have not suffered enough I see now that I must pay for your sins as well as mine what have you done what sins have your high and mighty people visited upon me" (SF, p. 127). The thoroughly selfish solution she proposes is to abandon Caddy at a time when she most needs a mother's support and protection, and to "take Jason and go where we are not known . . . that he may escape this curse try to forget that the others ever were" (SF, p. 128). The length at which Quentin dwells upon his mother's selfish abandonment of her moral duty toward the rest of her family is evidence of the influence she has had upon his own responses. As John Hunt observes:

> . . . the decline and fall of the Compson family is paced by the decline and fall of the woman from a position of virtuous eminence. Not only in Caddy but also in his mother does

> Quentin find no assent to the moral vision of which the code was a rationalization. . . . he does not enjoy the matriarchal structure under which the code of honor functions to provide meaning.[16]

At this point in the third part of the section, Quentin's thoughts turn once more to his fraternal family past. On a streetcar out to the country his mind shifts rapidly between memories of Gerald Bland and his mother and of the eve of Caddy's wedding. This time he associates Gerald with both Dalton Ames and Herbert Head, and the basis of this association seems to be the superior attitude of all three toward women. His fantasies of shooting Caddy's two suitors are interspersed with memories of Mrs. Bland "[t]elling us about Gerald's women in a . . . tone of smug approbation" (SF, p. 130). He recalls Caddy asking him to promise to look after Benjy and their father after her marriage, and then dwells at length upon his conversation with Herbert. One reason for Quentin's disapproval of Caddy's fiancé is revealed as it becomes clear that Herbert was expelled from Harvard for cheating. Quentin's rigid moral sense is further outraged by Herbert's attempt to bribe him not to disclose the matter to Caddy and her parents. His fragmented memories return over and over again to these three key points: he pleads with Caddy not to marry Herbert, whom he constantly refers to as "that blackguard"; he persistently asks her, "how are you sick," although he knows that her illness is the result of pregnancy; and he fantasizes about shooting "all of their voices through the floor of Caddy's room" (SF, p. 138).

Quentin's mind temporarily drifts away from these painful subjects, but is quickly called back by the memory of a hunting cry, "WhoOoooo. WhoOoooo." This sound suggests the word "who," which in turn suggests the question of who has fathered Caddy's child. His thoughts return abruptly to the eve of the wedding, and he recalls asking the painful question, "Have there been very many Caddy" (SF, p. 142), and receiving the equally painful reply, "I dont know too many" (SF, p. 143). His declaration, "You dont know whose it is then does he know" (SF, p. 143), represents a step in the plan of confessing to incest which he is formulating. Quentin is clearly willing to endorse almost any explanation of Caddy's situation rather than the true one. He cannot accept his father's view that "Women are never virgins. Purity is a negative state and therefore contrary to nature. It's nature is hurting you not Caddy" (SF, p. 143). Quentin refuses to consider the possibility that her loss of virginity may be a natural part of human life because such an idea contravenes the code of ethics which he believes in exclusively as a pattern and model for human behaviour. Ironically, the flames of hell seem "cleaner" to Quentin than the sordid and trivial incidents of human life: "If it could just be a hell beyond that: the clean flame the two of us more than dead. Then you will have only me then only me then the two of us amid the pointing and the horror beyond the clean flame" (SF, p. 144). It is clear that Quentin is unable to accept or endure a world which falls short of his own idealism. It is also clear that his response to his fraternal past is so dominated by his code of ethics that he is completely incapable of viewing Caddy realistically and accepting her human weaknesses.

After talking briefly with three boys on their way to fish in the river, Quentin once more becomes immersed in his own thoughts. In this fourth part of the section he continues to dwell upon his conversation with Caddy on the night before her wedding. His mind returns to her admission, "I've got to marry somebody" (SF, p. 139), and he recalls asking the superfluous question, "Why must you marry somebody Caddy" (SF, p. 151). Caddy is annoyed by this seeming attempt to elicit a confession and replies, "Do you want me to say it do you think that if I say it it wont be" (SF, p. 151). Surprisingly, Quentin does seem to think so. His response is confused and largely unintelligible, yet seems to indicate a belief that words can alter reality: "Say it to Father will you I will am my fathers Progenitive I invented him created I him Say it to him it will not be for he will say I was not and then you and I since philoprogenitive" (SF, p. 152). Although it is difficult, if not impossible, to follow Quentin's argument about the relativity of existence, the fact which does emerge clearly from this strange passage is that he sees words as somehow having a greater reality than physical facts ("it will not be for he will say I was not"). Thus an explanation is suggested for Quentin's decision to confess to incest: if he can convince himself that words have the power to alter reality, then he can delude himself into believing that a confession of incest will actually convert Caddy's promiscuity into incest. As has been shown, Quentin vastly prefers the horror of incest to the sordidness of a trivial dishonour. Of course, this is evidence of a mind which has become unbalanced; Quentin now has not only "separated ethics from the total context of humanity" (see above, p. 47), but is also in the process of separating them from reality itself.

In the midst of his conversation with Caddy, Quentin recalls his father's assertion of the equal absurdity of human life and death: "Man the sum of his climatic experiences Father said. Man the sum of what have you. A problem in impure properties carried tediously to an unvarying nil: stalemate of dust and desire" (SF, p. 153). Quentin cannot accept this view of human actions as insignificant and meaningless, and instead asserts the importance of what Caddy has done by trying to persuade her to run away with him rather than to marry Herbert. Quentin's frenzied search for a means by which to negate Caddy's dishonour is thus not only a response to his fraternal family past, but also a reaction against his parental past in that it is an attempt to disprove his father's view.

In the fifth part of the section, Quentin enters a bakery and encounters a little Italian girl who subsequently follows him throughout most of the afternoon until she is finally reclaimed by her brother. This is by far the most prolonged contact which occurs between Quentin and another individual in the entire section. As a result, it is the one part of the section in which the usual pattern of his consciousness is reversed, and he mainly responds to external reality with occasional intrusions of memory. In examining this part I will deal first with his memories, then show how they are related to the external reality in which he finds himself, and finally demonstrate how his responses to this reality reflect his responses to his family past.

Quentin's memory is first stimulated by the sight of a horse and buggy, which reminds him of Dr. Peabody, which in turn reminds him by association of Caddy's pregnancy: "*Seen the doctor yet have you seen Caddy*" (*SF*, p. 159). His question shows that he has accepted the fact that she is pregnant, although he is far from accepting her sexuality as natural and normal. His memory of his father's description of woman as a "[d]elicate equilibrium of periodical filth between two moons balanced" gradually merges into the images which he himself associates with female sexuality: "Liquid putrefaction like drowned things floating like pale rubber flabbily filled getting the odour of honeysuckle all mixed up" (*SF*, p. 159). Once again the association of images of sexuality, dirt, and death reveals Quentin's disgust at Caddy's promiscuity and its consequences (see above, p. 53). Also in this passage Quentin for the first time associates Caddy's sexuality with the smell of honeysuckle, an association which will be frequently repeated throughout the remainder of his section.

Quentin briefly recalls two occasions on which the smell of honeysuckle became unbearable for him, and then his mind abruptly reverts to an incident of his and Caddy's childhood. He recalls asking Caddy why she had let a boy kiss her, and then slapping her when she replied, "*I didn't let him I made him*" (*SF*, p. 166). Quentin is clearly punishing her for behaving improperly, yet he tells her, "*It's not for kissing I slapped you. . . . It's for letting it be some darn town squirt I slapped you*" (*SF*, p. 166). His words imply that Caddy has demeaned herself by bestowing favour upon a person who is unworthy of her. The similarity between this response and his later responses to Dalton Ames and Herbert Head suggests not only the length of time during which he has applied a rigid code of ethics to his experience, but also the strength of his insistence upon one aspect of that code, his family's honour. Caddy seems to recognize that it is as much her familiarity with a "town squirt" as her having kissed a boy which upsets Quentin: she retorts, "*I didnt kiss a dirty girl like Natalie anyway*" (*SF*, p. 166).

These words provide a transition to another memory from his childhood or early adolescence. He recalls playing some sort of sexual game with a girl named Natalie, which was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Caddy. After Natalie leaves, Quentin plunges into the hog wallow, then forces Caddy to listen to his "confession": "*You know what I was doing? . . . I was hugging her that's what I was doing. . . . I was hugging her I tell you*" (*SF*, p. 170). When Caddy replies that she doesn't give a damn what he was doing, Quentin flies into a rage and cries, "*You dont you dont I'll make you I'll make you give a damn*" (*SF*, p. 170). Following a scuffle in the mud Quentin demands, "*Do you care now do you do you*" (*SF*, p. 171), and then declares, "*I told you I'd make you*" (*SF*, p. 172). Caddy still refuses to attach any importance to his actions, and only replies once again, "*I dont give a goddam what you do*" (*SF*, p. 172).

Quentin's determination to elicit a response from Caddy reveals another aspect of his rigid code of ethics. Not only does he want her to obey it (as shown by the previous punishment for kissing), but he also wants her to share and enforce it. It is clear that Quentin views his sexual experimentation as a breach of the code,[17] and he expects--he demands--that Caddy endorse his code by rebuking him for his actions. When she fails to do so he is enraged; he sees her failure to enforce the code as equally reprehensible with his own breach of it.[18] From this it is clear that Quentin persistently sees Caddy as part of his ethical order, in spite of her resistance. As Olga Vickery points out, "He begins grooming Caddy for her role from the outset, insisting on her conformity to his conception of her. . . . But his main intention is not simply to punish her for forgetting her part but to make her understand the significance of her role. . . ."[19] In spite of his efforts, Caddy does not grasp this significance, will not--probably cannot--share his code, and simply "doesn't give a damn" about the whole matter.

It is significant that these two incidents are the only memories of Quentin's childhood relationship with Caddy to be found in the section, for he recalls them while accompanied by a little Italian girl. This suggests that the little girl somehow becomes associated in his mind with his sister. André Bleikasten points out a further link between Quentin's present realities and his memories of past ones by noting that Natalie is referred to as "a dirty girl," Caddy of course becomes dirty during their scuffle in the hog wallow, and the little Italian girl's first impression upon Quentin is that of "a little dirty child" (SF, p. 155).[20] Clearly it is because the little Italian girl is a child and also dirty that Quentin is led to associate her with two other children whom he saw as "dirty" in the figurative sense of the word, with the result that he recalls these two early incidents of his own and Caddy's improper behaviour.

Quentin's encounter with the little Italian girl does, however, play a far more important role than merely that of reminding him of the past. Although his thoughts reveal only a subconscious association of the little girl with Caddy, his words and actions are clear evidence of what amounts to a substitution of her for his absent sister. Most obviously, the fact that he calls her "sister" is significant, especially as he uses the term more than a dozen times and only once addresses her in any other way. Also, he immediately upon encountering her assumes the role of her protector, and lies in order to save her from the questions of a suspicious shop-keeper. Although the little girl's persistent following of him is a nuisance, and her continuous presence an unwanted burden, Quentin's actions clearly show that he feels some sort of obligation toward her. He tries to turn her over to the sheriff and, that failing, to find her home. Although at one point he tries to rid himself of the responsibility by running away, he accepts her presence when she suddenly reappears as if he feels it is his inevitable duty to accompany her. In short, his response to her is exactly that of a loyal, though somewhat grudging, older brother who has abruptly found himself with the responsibility of minding a younger sister.

Not only are Quentin's responses to the little Italian girl generally those of a brother toward a sister, but they can also be seen specifically as a parody of his responses to Caddy. Quentin has found himself in a situation which superficially parallels his fraternal family past, and he tries to deal with it in much the same way. Again he is unexpectedly faced with the problem of a "sister" who does not behave as he feels she should, and again he instinctively assumes responsibility for putting matters right. The absent sheriff is of no more help to him than the father who "distanced" himself from the situation through cynicism. This little girl, too (at least so far as Quentin can discover), is motherless, and his previous remark about Caddy, "My little sister had no. If I could say Mother. Mother" (see above, p. 55), is echoed by what has now become a frantic plea for help: he imagines accosting the child's mother with, "Madam, your daughter, if you please. No. Madam, for God's sake, your daughter" (SF, p. 164). Again Quentin is looking for assistance in dealing with a wayward "sister," and again he finds that the representatives of parental authority are unwilling, or unable, to come to his aid. Clearly, in his efforts to cope with the little Italian girl, Quentin is re-enacting his struggle with Caddy. Thus his response to his fraternal family past is at this point shown to be influencing his responses to present realities to the point of virtually dictating them.

After attempting to escape the little Italian girl's persistent presence by running away, Quentin unexpectedly encounters her again some distance from where he left her. What is significant is that he neither shows any surprise at so sudden and improbable an event, nor wonders at her unexplained presence at the exact point at which he climbed over the wall.[21] In the midst of his memories of Natalie and Caddy, Quentin accepts the little girl's reappearance as if he views her, not as a physical presence, but as merely an extension of his own thoughts:

> I didnt kiss a dirty girl like Natalie anyway The wall went into shadow. . . . I climbed the wall. And then she watched me jump down, holding the loaf against her dress.
>
> I stood in the weeds and we looked at one another for a while.
>
> 'Why didnt you tell me you lived out this way, sister?' . . . 'Well, come on then and show me the house.' not a dirty girl like Natalie (SF, pp. 166-167).

It no more occurs to Quentin to wonder at the little girl's presence on the other side of the wall than to be surprised at the presence of Caddy and Natalie in his thoughts. Thus it is clear that in Quentin's mind the present is beginning to merge with his past, and he is no longer fully capable of distinguishing between them.

Furthermore, although Quentin does not recognize his response to the little Italian girl as a parody of his earlier response to Caddy, he does at last become aware of the ironic parallels between the two situations. When he is arrested and accused by Julio of trying to "steal" his sister, Quentin begins to laugh uncontrollably. His laughter is less a sign of amusement than of emotional hysteria, as shown by the difficulty he has in regaining control of himself, and by the officers' perception of him as crazy. Ironically, the protector and champion of female honour is suspected of having evil designs upon the virtue of a little girl. Even more ironically, Julio wants to kill Quentin for "stealing" his sister, which is exactly what Quentin fantasized about doing to Dalton

Ames, and for exactly the same reason. Quentin's laughter shows that he perceives the irony of the role into which he has been cast by Julio and the officers of the law. His hysteria may also be an indication that he is aware of the contrast between himself and Julio, who has been far more successful in rescuing his sister from an apparently threatening male influence than Quentin himself was. In spite of this final recognition of the ironic nature of his encounter with the little Italian girl, Quentin is even less in control of his obsession and his despair at the close of this incident than he was at its outset. His hysteria, as well as the blurring of past and present in his responses, are symptoms of a state of mind which is becoming less and less able to cope with external reality.

Quentin's increasing inability to separate present realities from past ones is even more dramatically revealed by the incident which follows his encounter with the little Italian girl. In the sixth part of the section, Quentin's repeated association of Gerald Bland with Dalton Ames (see above, pp. 52, 57) culminates in a substitution of Bland for Ames which parallels his substitution of the little Italian girl for Caddy. Riding in Mrs. Bland's car, Quentin's consciousness shifts rapidly back and forth between the smug remarks he hears Mrs. Bland making about the "gentlemanly" tastes of her father and Gerald, and memories of Caddy's affair with Dalton Ames. As he recalls Caddy talking about Ames, Gerald and Ames merge into a common identity in Quentin's mind: "*talking about him* [Ames] *the oar blades winking him* [Gerald] *along winking the Cap made for motoring in England* [worn by Gerald] *and all time rushing beneath and they two blurred within the other forever more he* [Ames] *had been in the army had killed men*" (*SF*, p. 184).

Quentin's memories throughout this part of the section are again permeated with the honeysuckle smell which symbolizes for him Caddy's sexuality. The depth of his horror and disgust at her promiscuity is here revealed by his association of it with animalistic images: "*running the beast with two backs . . . running the swine of Euboeleus running coupled*" (*SF*, p. 184). He remembers trying to persuade Caddy to co-operate with his scheme of confessing to incest, to which she only replied by reminding him of his own virginity: "*Poor Quentin youve never done that have you*" (*SF*, p. 185). In his efforts to persuade her, Quentin first appealed to her concern for her father, then threatened to force her into complying, and finally attempted to convince her that incest had actually been committed:

> *I'll tell Father then itll have to be because you love Father then we'll have to go away amid the pointing and the horror the clean flame I'll make you say we did I'm stronger than you I'll make you know we did you thought it was them but it was me listen I fooled you all the time it was me* (*SF*, p. 185).

Quentin's adoption of one means after another to win Caddy's agreement reveals his frantic determination to convert her dishonour into the (for him) more acceptable form of incest, and his attempt to persuade her that it was really himself who acted as her lover is further evidence that his grip on reality has been slackening for some time.

Quentin recalls that in answer to his question, "*did you love them Caddy*," she replied, "*When they touched me I died*" (*SF*, p. 185), thereby frankly admitting her compliance with, and pleasure in, her seduction. Such an admission was and is too much for Quentin, and at this point in his narration his rage and frustration find an outlet in a physical assault upon Gerald Bland. As Shreve later reveals, Gerald was at the moment of Quentin's attack speaking disparagingly of women. Clearly, Quentin equated this attitude on Gerald's part with Dalton Ames' previous assertion that women were "all bitches" (see above, p. 52), and the substitution of Gerald for Ames became complete. That Quentin was attacking Ames in the guise of Gerald is confirmed by the fact that he challenged Gerald with the same question he asked Ames, "Did you ever have a sister?" (see above, p. 52). As Spoade later describes the incident to Quentin, "'The first I knew was when you jumped up all of a sudden and said, "Did you ever have a sister? did you?" and when he said No, you hit him'" (SF, p. 206). It is clear that Quentin's response to external reality has once again been dictated by his response to his fraternal past, this time to the point where he actually confuses the present reality with a past one.

While unconscious after his fight with Gerald, Quentin relives the evening on which Caddy's loss of virginity was revealed and his subsequent confrontation with Dalton Ames. Following Caddy to the creek, Quentin tries to find a way to circumvent the reality of what has happened. He first tries to believe that she was raped: "did he make you then he made you do it let him he was stronger than you . . ." (SF, p. 187). If Caddy will agree that it was rape rather than seduction, then Quentin will be able to follow a clear course of action based upon his ideals of honour and chivalry: he will kill Ames, they will take his Harvard tuition and go away together, and "nobody need ever know" (SF, p. 187). What Quentin cannot, above all, accept is that Caddy may have been a willing participant in the act; he insists, "Caddy you hate him dont you" (SF, p. 187). Her reply only reinforces the reality of what he refuses to accept: "yes I hate him I would die for him I've already died for him

I die for him over and over again . . ." (SF, p. 188). Caddy seems to realize that Quentin has attached a disproportionate significance to both her virginity and the loss of it; her repeated comment, "poor Quentin . . . youve never done that have you" (SF, p. 188), shows that she believes his horrified reaction to result from his complete lack of sexual experience. Although she has no inkling of the deeper and more abstract origins of his response, she agrees to the "remedy" he suggests.

In a scene with highly sexual overtones, Quentin proposes to cut Caddy's throat and then commit suicide himself in the same way. He fumbles the attempt, and it seems doubtful if either of them took his proposal seriously in the first place. Perhaps Quentin's failure is partly due to lack of courage, although he later has sufficient courage to bring about his own suicide. However, both his suggestion and his failure to carry it out can be seen to arise from the dictates of his code of ethics: although according to the code, anything, even death, is preferable to dishonour, to commit murder is a violation of the code. Furthermore, to kill Caddy is to admit implicitly that she is guilty and deserves killing, and so is hardly a solution to the problem. Similarly, although incest is preferable to promiscuity, to commit incest would be to "destroy his [ethical] order completely by involving him in the terrible reality of experience."[22] Thus when Caddy declares, "yes Ill do anything you want me to anything yes," Quentin angrily replies, "you shut up you shut up" (SF, p. 194). For Caddy to agree to commit incest is for Quentin unthinkable, since it destroys the idealized conception of her upon which his code depends and which he even now refuses to abandon. The only other alternative is for Quentin to rape Caddy, and this seems to be part of the underlying sexual implications of the previous scene with the knife. Rape would, of course, transfer the guilt from Caddy to Quentin, but would also be a violation of his code.

Thus it is clear that Quentin's code of ethics creates for him an impossible dilemma: he is compelled to act in order to redeem his sister's honour, yet all possible actions are forbidden. The most he can do is to declare to Caddy, "I wish you were dead" (SF, p. 195). Furthermore, the contradictions in which his code involves him are immense and insoluble. When Caddy later asks where he is going, Quentin replies, "none of your business whore whore" (SF, p. 197), yet in spite of this private condemnation of her he is compelled to confront Ames and publicly defend her honour as if she is the most virtuous of women. When Ames tells him, "listen no good taking it so hard its not your fault kid it would have been some other fellow," and then replies to Quentin's "did you ever have a sister" with "no but theyre all bitches" (SF, p. 199), Quentin must fight Ames even if he privately feels this to be true. The crowning insult occurs when Ames demonstrates his prowess with a revolver, then offers it to Quentin to kill him with if he chooses. Quentin is thus deprived of his role as chivalric hero and defender of female honour and virtue, and must bear the further indignities of fainting and of Ames' solicitude about him.

This incident, as recalled and narrated by Quentin, shows that he not only failed privately to "restore" his sister's purity by either killing her or converting her promiscuity into incest, but also publicly failed to defend even the façade of her honour. Ames refused to play the villain, and Quentin found himself unable to play the avenging hero. Thus an important cause of Quentin's despair is made clear by this further revelation of his fraternal family past.

When he regains consciousness after the fight with Gerald, Quentin makes his way back to Harvard alone. In the seventh and final part of his section he recalls his abhorrence of the smell of honeysuckle:

> . . . after the honeysuckle got all mixed up in it the whole thing came to symbolize night and unrest I seemed to be lying neither asleep nor awake looking down a long corridor of grey halflight where all stable things had become shadowy paradoxical all I had done shadows all I had felt suffered taking visible form antic and perverse mocking without relevance inherent themselves with the denial of the significance they should have affirmed thinking I was I was not who was not was not who (SF, p. 211).

This complex passage makes clear some important facts. It shows that Caddy's promiscuity, represented here by the smell of honeysuckle, is not only a source of moral outrage and repugnance to Quentin, but is also in some way a negation of meaning: as he lies in bed smelling the honeysuckle, all "stable things" seem to him "shadowy paradoxical." He feels that the significance of all he has "felt suffered"--of his whole life, in short--has been mocked and refuted by Caddy's actions. Quentin's sense of his own identity has been challenged by this blow to the code of ethics upon which he has based his life, and he is led to question his very existence: "I was I was not who was not was not who." Thus the tremendous importance for Quentin of his self-created ethical order is revealed, as it becomes clear that it has been the central source of meaning in his life.[23] Furthermore, because Caddy's purity was an essential part of this order, it is clear that Quentin's sense of meaning in life has been seriously challenged by the events of his fraternal family past.

One reason for Quentin's need of a rigid code of ethics to imbue his life with meaning is suggested by his comment upon the inadequacy of his parents:

> When I was little there was a picture in one of our books, a dark place into which a single weak ray of light came slanting upon two faces lifted out of the shadow. . . . I'd have to turn back to it until the dungeon was Mother herself she and Father upward into weak light holding hands and us lost somewhere below even them without even a ray of light (SF, p. 215).

Clearly, Quentin feels that his parents have not provided their children with a guide, a "light" by which to live, and have instead left them to wander in darkness and meaninglessness. Quentin makes two further comments upon his parents' failures. With regard to his mother, he now applies his previous remark about Caddy's "motherlessness" (see above, p. 55) to himself: "if I'd just had a mother so I could say Mother Mother" (SF, p. 213). With regard to his father, Quentin declares that he deliberately schooled his children to see life as pointless and existence as meaningless: ". . . Father was teaching us that all men are just accumulations dolls stuffed with sawdust swept up from the trash heaps where all previous dolls had been thrown away the sawdust flowing from what wound in what side that not for me died not" (SF, p. 218). One reason for Quentin's adoption of a rigid code of ethics has been, then, the necessity of establishing a center of meaning in his life in order to fill the void left by his parents' failures. This is but one more indication of the great importance of the influence of Quentin's parental family past.

Quentin's thoughts suggest that the formation of his code may also have resulted partly from a need for permanence in what seems to him an unstable world. Of his plan to confess to incest he remarks, "if people could only change one another forever that way merge like a flame swirling up for an instant then blown cleanly out along the cool eternal dark . . ." (SF, p. 219). Quentin finally decides that the only permanence he can achieve is the arresting of his own consciousness through death. By committing suicide he can preserve his ethical order from the experiences which threaten it. The close of Quentin's section consists of a long, remembered dialogue between himself and his father in which they discuss his confession of incest and his professed intention to commit suicide. To his father's reassurance, "we must just stay awake and see evil done for a little while its not always," Quentin replies, "it doesnt have to be even that long for a man of courage" (SF, p. 219). His father does not take his threat of suicide seriously, declaring, "i think you are too serious to give me any cause for alarm" (SF, p. 219).

Mr. Compson's subsequent remarks suggest that it is because Quentin fears that his response might prove temporary that he wishes to preserve it from the effects of time by dying:

> you cannot bear to think that someday it will no longer hurt you like this . . . you will not do that [commit suicide] until you come to believe that even she was not quite worth despair perhaps (SF, pp. 220-221).

Perhaps his father is wrong, and Quentin commits suicide as the ultimate protest against Caddy's actions and the supreme assertion of their importance. Perhaps his father is right, and Quentin commits suicide because her actions are becoming insignificant with the passage of time, depriving him of the last shred of the meaning he has tried to find in his experience. Whichever is the case, Quentin's suicide is both his final response to his family past and his final act of allegiance to the code of ethics which he has imposed upon his life and undeviatingly followed to the end.

* * * * *

Thus Quentin's section of the novel shows that he is influenced by his family past to the extent that his sense of identity, feeling of self-worth, and pattern of response are dictated by it. His sense of identity is based upon his perception of himself as the last defender of his family's honour, and the slighting of this honour by his sister has so shaken his sense of identity that he questions his very existence. His failure to either prevent or avenge his sister's disgrace and the slight to his family's honour has completely deprived him of his sense of self-worth. Partly in response to the influence of his parental and fraternal family pasts, Quentin has adopted a strict code of ethical behaviour and imposed it rigidly upon his perceptions of and responses to past and present. This pattern of behaviour is based upon the principles of purity, honour, and chivalry, and he has vainly tried to uphold these principles in a world which has largely forgotten them. As a result, the parental and fraternal family pasts are for him a series of failures which he cannot accept, and he is reduced to a state of impotent rage and hopeless despair. Like Bayard Sartoris, he is finally destroyed by his response to his family past.

Quentin's section of the novel thus gives the reader a fairly clear picture of his responses to his family past and of the code of ethics upon which he has patterned his life. When the reader turns from the novel proper to the Appendix, he finds that this picture has been completed and perfected. The link between Caddy's virginity and the family's honour so frequently implied in Quentin's section is here made explicit: "QUENTIN III. Who loved not his sister's body but some concept of Compson honor precariously and (he knew well) only temporarily supported by the minute fragile membrane of her maidenhead . . ." (SF, p. 411).

Thus it becomes clear that it is Quentin's one-to-one equation of the physical circumstance of Caddy's virginity with the abstract concept of his family's honour which is the core around which his elaborate ethical order has been built and the key element in his response to his family past.

The Appendix also defines the role played by the ancestral family past in the formation of his code by suggesting that his concepts of honour, virtue, and chivalry are derived from his perception of his family's history:

> . . . that long line of men [the Compsons] who had had something in them of decency and pride even after they had begun to fail at the integrity and the pride had become mostly vanity and self-pity: from the expatriate who had to flee his native land with little else except his life yet who still refused to accept defeat, through the man who gambled his life and his good name twice and lost twice and declined to accept that either, and the one who with only a clever small quarterhorse for tool avenged his dispossessed father and grandfather and gained a principality, and the brilliant and gallant governor and the general who though he failed at leading in battle brave and gallant men at least risked his own life too in the failing, to the cultured dipsomaniac [Quentin's father] who sold the last of his patrimony not to buy drink but to give one of his descendants [Quentin] at least the best chance in life he could think of (SF, pp. 415-416).

It is clear that Quentin possesses the same gallantry, loyalty to his family, and willingness to risk all for what he believes in which characterized his ancestors, and even to some extent his father. This suggests that he has formulated his code of ethics partly in response to his perception that there is something valuable and worth preserving in his ancestral family past. In this way, the interaction of all three aspects of his family's past to produce his code of ethics, and thus to influence his responses to past and present realities, is revealed.

In conclusion, the development of the theme of "family past" is far more skilfully and effectively executed in this novel than in Sartoris. The use of the first-person point of view produces a much clearer characterization of the protagonist, and the code of behaviour which governs his responses to his family past and to the present is thus set more forcefully before the reader. In The Sound and the Fury little is left to mere implication; any points which are not made perfectly clear in the novel proper are commented upon in the Appendix. Therefore, although the theme is developed extensively in only one of the novel's four sections, and although the addition of the Appendix is necessary to complete and emphasize the thematic development, the overall presentation of the theme of "family past" in this novel is, within these limits, as clear and complete as the critical reader could wish.

CHAPTER IV

In As I Lay Dying Faulkner develops the theme of "family past" through the portrayal of a group of characters very different from those in Sartoris and The Sound and the Fury. The aristocratic Sartorises and Compsons, with their traditional values and distinguished ancestors, are succeeded by an impoverished country family with neither heroic traditions to uphold nor inherited codes of behaviour to follow. The Bundrens' family past consists entirely of the relationships which have been formed within the immediate family group of husband, wife, sons, and daughter. Their family past does not, except in one minor instance, go beyond these two generations, and constantly overlaps with the present because all of the family members, with one exception, are still living. The emphasis in As I Lay Dying therefore falls upon the fraternal and parental pasts, while the ancestral family past is of relatively little importance.

As a result of this emphasis upon the fraternal and parental pasts, all of the Bundrens are to some degree influenced by the family's past in that all are affected by the relationships--established in the past and continuing into the present--among the members of the family. However, as in Sartoris and The Sound and the Fury, there is one character who serves as a focus for the development of the theme of "family past." Darl, the most articulate and most fully-developed character, is also the one individual who is shown to have derived a sense of his personal identity (or lack of it), an idea of his own worth, and a pattern of response to present realities from his family's past. However, it is only the parental and fraternal aspects which have influenced Darl, for he does not respond to, and is to all appearances unaware of, his ancestral family past.

Although Darl follows a consistent pattern of responses in dealing with present realities, his behaviour is not dictated by a code, by a set of ideals and values such as Young Bayard Sartoris and Quentin Compson have extracted from their families' pasts. The circumstances influencing Darl's behaviour are much less abstract and much more obvious to the reader: rejected emotionally by his mother, Darl is intensely jealous of his half-brother, Jewel, who is her favourite. His fraternal past and present is dominated by his relationship with Jewel, and he consistently responds to Jewel's presence with a mixture of admiration and antagonism. His parental past and present focuses upon his relationship with his mother, and his responses reveal a constant struggle to come to terms with his conflicting feelings toward her. In turn, her attitudes toward her children are shown to have resulted from the nature of her relationships with her husband, her lover, and--to a lesser extent --her father. In short, although the Bundrens have no time-honoured tradition and no elaborate code of behaviour derived from it, family past is a powerful influence upon their lives as well, and once again has an important place in the thematic structure of the novel.

Perhaps because both the circumstances of the family's past and the characters' responses to it are less abstract and more easily defined, there is greater critical agreement about the importance and operation of the theme of "family past" in this novel than in Sartoris and The Sound and the Fury. Virtually all critics of As I Lay Dying agree, either explicitly or implicitly, that it is Addie's attitude toward her family which produces most of the novel's action, both physical and psychological. It is, after all, her death-bed request to be buried at Jefferson which launches the family on a journey during which the underlying tensions and hostilities among its members are intensified. As Addie herself reveals, both the request and the conflict within the family have resulted from her feelings toward her husband and children, and from the different relationships she has formed with each of her offspring. Thus Addie is a mother who, even after death, has a dominant influence upon her children's lives. Her position of power in the family is emphasized by the comparative insignificance of her husband, Anse, who is too self-centered and lazy to have much effect upon his children.

Most commentators on the novel also agree that the major effect upon Darl of Addie's attitude toward him has been to deprive him almost completely of a sense of personal identity. Addie's section reveals that she rejected Darl even before his birth as unexpected and unwanted, and it is this rejection, most critics agree, which has contributed to--if not produced--the unusual state of consciousness, eventually culminating in madness, in which Darl constantly questions his identity, and even his existence. As André Bleikasten remarks, "Deprived of all lineage, unloved and rootless, nobody's son, Darl is the merest fluid gesture of a being."[1] Although Kenneth Richardson is too harsh in condemning Addie as a purely selfish woman who makes all of her children "tragic victims" of her selfishness, he too is correct in asserting that Addie's rejection of Darl has had a definite and negative effect: "Darl does not fit into her life at all. It is he who correctly senses, 'I have no mother.' He is forced to live in a family where his existence does not count; as a result he is a little 'queer.'"[2]

Other critics have attempted more detailed analyses of the effects of Addie's rejection upon Darl. Olga Vickery declares that Darl's abnormal consciousness reflects a previous state of mind on Addie's part:

> Darl . . . faithfully reflects and dramatizes Addie's attitude at the time of his birth. She had believed . . . that reality lay only in physical experience and that the word and the act were polar opposites. Feeling Darl to be an outrage, she had denied him a place in her affections and in her world. Consequently, Darl's is a world of consciousness exclusively, and this, of course, renders his connection with the external world increasingly precarious and insecure.[3]

Another critic points out that it is Addie's rejection of Darl which has produced his obsession with the question of identity:

> Darl exists, but, because he is unloved, he cannot become himself; at least this is the explanation that he himself seems to favor. . . . love is choice in its very essence, a vital preference of this being over that one, a corroboration of the beloved; and Darl knows that he has never been affirmed.[4]

In short, it is generally agreed that both the unusual form of Darl's consciousness and the way in which he sees himself (i.e., his sense of identity, or lack of one, and his estimation of his own worth) are largely, if not wholly, the products of Addie's rejection--in other words, of the influence of his parental family past.

There is also considerable agreement among critics about the ways in which Darl's thoughts and actions, his responses to present realities, reflect the influence of his family's past upon him. However, I feel that the assumptions underlying many of these views should be challenged, as they often fail to take into account all of the evidence. For instance, many critics have noted the obvious antagonism between Darl and Jewel; Cleanth Brooks describes Darl's taunting of Jewel as "bitter and even cruel."[5] Although this is often true, what Brooks fails to note is that on other occasions Darl displays quite different feelings toward his brother. The underlying assumption that Darl's attitude toward Jewel is limited to envy and resentment fails to take into account Darl's admiration of Jewel, his loyalty to him, and his concern about him. I will attempt to show that Darl's response to his fraternal family past is more complex than mere jealous hatred of a rival.

Furthermore, the most common critical view of Darl's attitude toward the funeral journey is that he constantly opposes it because he sees the attempt to fulfill a promise made to a woman now dead as pointless and absurd. Because Darl responds to the events of the journey with a certain amount of detachment (as indeed he does to much of external reality), many critics have assumed that he is an aloof observer who sees the journey from much the same vantage point as the reader. Cleanth Brooks says of Darl, ". . . he voices what is probably the reader's own revulsion against the Bundrens' foolish and horrible journey: . . ."[6] However, I find little evidence of Darl's supposed opposition to the journey: from his assistance in loading the coffin into the wagon to his offer to buy a spade to dig the grave, most of his deeds forward the action, and, in spite of Brooks' conviction that Darl voices the reader's possible disapproval, I can find scarcely a line in which he does so. It seems to me that for most of the journey (i.e., up to the point where he tries to destroy the coffin by fire), Darl is as committed to the literal fulfillment of his mother's wishes, and thus as bound by his parental family past, as Cash and Jewel are; and indeed, he is more committed than the remaining members of the family, who have selfish reasons for endorsing the trip to Jefferson.

Because Darl sets fire to the barn in which his mother's coffin is sheltered, many critics have assumed not only that he opposes the journey, but that he has comparatively little emotional attachment to his dead mother. Darl's action is generally regarded as a thoroughly practical solution to the family's problem--a solution which he has been able to arrive at because he is free of the emotional ties that still bind the other children, and especially Jewel, to Addie. Olga Vickery remarks:

> . . . the judgment of Darl's attempt to destroy the coffin and of Jewel's grim efforts to saves [sic] it must depend upon whether the body is viewed realistically or symbolically. Darl's action issues from his conviction that the corpse has long since become an offense to God and man, Jewel's from the equally strong emotional conviction that the coffin contains his mother.[7]

However, I believe there are grounds for challenging this assumption that Darl views his mother's body, not at all emotionally, but only realistically (i.e., as merely a decaying corpse to be disposed of with all possible haste). Surely it is significant that although Darl is usually an acute observer of external reality, he does not once describe the smell of the decaying corpse. Furthermore, he never refers to the coffin as a coffin; rather, he consistently thinks and speaks of both corpse and coffin as "Addie." This hardly demonstrates a thoroughly realistic and practical attitude toward his mother's body. Nor does his fantasy that Addie is talking in her coffin, calling upon God to hide her away from the sight of man. Could his action in setting fire to the barn not result from a desperate need to end a situation in which the mother to whom he still feels a strong emotional attachment has been transformed into an object of horrified repugnance to everyone the family meets, and even to themselves? Could it not, in other words, be an intensely emotional response, as well as a realistic recognition of what propriety and decency demand? In short, I will argue that Darl does not act primarily in protest to a journey which he sees as absurd, nor in an effort to find a practical solution to the family's problem, but that he is in his own way being true to Addie, to his parental past. His action in setting fire to the barn can be viewed as much as an expression of loyalty and emotional attachment to his dead mother as Jewel's actions in rescuing the coffin from fire and flood.

Finally, many critics maintain that Darl is obsessed by a need for a sense of kinship with the other members of his family. The reasoning behind this critical assumption is outlined in a remark by Jack Goellner: "Darl was rejected by Addie at his birth as the intolerable second violation. His effort, therefore, is directed towards gaining acceptance and recognition."[8] Frederick Hoffman makes the same point in a different way: "His acts and his words are both desperate stratagems to assert himself as a member of the human race and of a family."[9] The matter is taken one step further by Irving Howe, who declares that Darl's final madness results from his exclusion from kinship with his brothers and sister: "Darl is the family sacrifice. An unwanted son, he seeks continually to find a place in the family"; ". . . it is Darl's sense of being unwanted which drives him to his obsessive questionings and finally his collapse."[10]

However, it seems to me illogical that Darl should deliberately oppose and antagonize two members of his family, Jewel and Dewey Dell, if he desperately craves kinship and a sense of "belonging." Furthermore, Darl hardly seems to me an outcast, a "family sacrifice." Although he is rejected by Addie and frequently in conflict with Jewel and Dewey Dell, it is clear that he has close ties of affection and understanding with Cash and Vardaman.[11] Even his emotional relationships with his mother, sister, and half-brother are not untypical of those one might expect in a family in which serious conflicts are present. Much of Darl's behaviour is, as Hoffman says, an attempt to "assert" himself, but it seems to me that he is trying to assert himself as an individual rather than as a son or brother. Darl's lack of a strong sense of identity has already been mentioned, and it is my belief that his quest is not for kinship, but for self-definition. In his efforts to establish a sense of his own identity, Darl uses whatever means come to hand, including defining himself through opposition to others. Thus the pattern of response to present realities which Darl follows is, I believe, the result of a considerably more complex relationship to his family's past than has generally been recognized.

* * * * *

The powerful influence which Addie has exerted, and continues to exert after her death, upon all of her children forms the heart of the novel's thematic development. Olga Vickery accounts for her power as follows:

> . . . it is Addie not as a mother, corpse, or promise but as an element in the blood of her children who dominates and shapes their complex psychological reactions. Their motivation lies within her life, for she is the source of the tension and latent violence which each of them feels within himself and expresses in his contacts with the rest of the family. Obsessed by their own relationships to Addie, they can resolve that tension only when they have come to terms with her as a person and with what she signifies in their own consciousness.[12]

It does indeed seem that the surviving Bundrens are attempting to "come to terms" with Addie, for each of them tries to preserve the relationship with her which existed while she was alive. This is indicated by their responses to her death: all of the family members think, speak, and act as if she is still living. Even Anse, who seems completely shallow emotionally, is unwilling--or unable--to think of Addie as dead, and counters all attempts to dissuade him from the journey by declaring that Addie is "impatient" to reach Jefferson: "'I give her my promise. Her mind is set on it.'"[13]

Darl, as I have previously noted, constantly refers to the coffin as "Addie," and, as the physical and emotional ordeal of the journey pushes him closer to insanity, fantasizes that her corpse is talking. Although Cash and Jewel do not explicitly refer to Addie as still living, the elaborate care they take of the coffin, even to the extent of risking their own lives in order to save it, suggests that they too think of her in this way. The two youngest members of the family are also unable to accept the finality of Addie's death. Dewey Dell, obsessed with her advancing pregnancy, exclaims, "I heard that my mother is dead. I wish I had time to let her die" (AILD, p. 114). Vardaman, who is perhaps the most unwilling to realize that his mother has died, creates for himself a fantasy world in which he can "keep her alive" by substituting a fish for her corpse. In a sense, the Bundrens refuse to let Addie die, and this partly accounts for the power she continues to have over their lives.

Dr. Peabody provides a comment upon the Bundrens' responses to Addie's death: ". . . when I was young I believed death to be a phenomenon of the body; now I know it to be merely a function of the mind --and that of the minds of the ones who suffer the bereavement" (AILD, p. 42). In Peabody's mind, Addie has been "dead" ten days when her physical death occurs; however, in the minds of her husband and children she remains "alive" for eight days after her death and only ceases to live when her body is finally buried in Jefferson.[14] Addie's ambiguous state of being--physically dead yet very much alive in the minds of her descendants--is emphasized by the placement of the section narrated from her point of view after the section in which her death occurs. It is also emphasized by the title of the novel: although in the literal sense Addie "lays dying" in only the first fifth of the novel, her family is unable to think of her as dead until her body has been properly buried; therefore, all of the events in the novel, except those of the final pages, do in the figurative sense occur as Addie "lay dying."

The unwillingness, or inability, of Addie's husband and children to think of her as dead is not simply the result of refusal to accept the unpleasant reality of death. Rather, Addie's influence upon them was so powerful before her death that they continue for a time to respond to it, even though she is no longer living and able to influence them directly. André Bleikasten observes: "The Bundrens . . . speak of Addie as if she were still alive, attributing needs, thoughts, and intentions to her; it is her presence, felt by everyone, that keeps the family together during the journey, and it is to all appearances her imperious will that makes them carry the task through to the end."[15] Thus, as noted previously, the Bundrens' responses to Addie's death partly account for her continued influence upon their lives for the following eight days, and it is in Addie's dominating personality that the explanation of those responses is to be found.

Of course, the promise made to Addie and the private reasons which several family members have for wanting to go to Jefferson also partly account for the family's commitment to the funeral journey. Much critical energy has been devoted to evaluating this journey and attempting to determine whether it is primarily a heroic undertaking or a ridiculous manifestation of human folly and selfishness. I am not, however, concerned with this question; my discussion will merely show that the Bundrens are, whether for selfish or unselfish reasons, committed to the fulfillment of the promise, and thus obedient to the dictates of the family's past as it is represented by Addie. An important part of my examination of the text will be to show that it is the powerful influence of Addie's character, and especially of what it has caused her to give and to refuse to her husband and children, which dictates their responses to her and to each other, and thus to a great extent determines both the family's past and its present. As I have previously mentioned (see above, p. 77), the focus of this examination will be upon Darl, as the individual who is by far the most profoundly influenced by his family past.

The most obvious result of Addie's influence upon her children, apart from their responses to her death, concerns the relationship between Darl and Jewel. As numerous critics have observed, not only is this relationship introduced by the very first words of the novel, but the *nature* of the relationship is also suggested by the manner in which it [illegible] introduced. Irving Howe comments, "The first word of the book, uttered by Darl, is 'Jewel,' and it announces a major theme: Darl's fitful preoccupation with his brother."[16] That Darl is preoccupied with Jewel in this first section of the novel is shown by the fact that he describes him in minute detail, noting the look of his eyes and of his face, the way he walks, and even his clothes. He also makes a point of stating that Jewel is much taller than himself. The section as a whole establishes the facts that Darl is a precise observer and that he constantly observes his brother, and also suggests that he views Jewel with a certain amount of admiration, or, as André Bleikasten puts it, "fascinated jealousy":

> It is fascinated jealousy above all, as is evident from the enormous importance Jewel is given in his monologues. 'Jewel and I . . . ,' so starts Darl's first section, and of the eighteen others attributed to him, ten open similarly with a reference to the resented and envied brother.[17]

When Darl speaks for the second time in the novel, his preoccupation with Jewel is more dramatically revealed. He describes Jewel's mastering of his horse with a concentration upon his appearance and actions even more marked than in the first section, but what is extraordinary is that Darl is no longer actually watching Jewel. Surprisingly, Darl not only describes in the finest detail something which is occurring elsewhere, but his account is given in such a way that it seems to be not an imaginative rendering of what he thinks Jewel is doing at that moment, but a factual description of what is actually happening. William Handy points out one of the ways in which this effect is achieved:

> . . . [in the third sentence of Darl's description] abruptly Faulkner changes from the future tense reflecting Darl's imagined view of the scene to the present tense--as if Darl were actually reporting the scene. . . . Darl suddenly becomes the author of Jewel's experience. We accept the viewpoint as Jewel's. . . . Darl's acute sensitivity has invaded the awareness of his brother, so that not only is Darl constantly aware of his brother's external actions but of Jewel's inner experience.[18]

In addition, of course, to the change from future to present tense noted here, the dramatic imagery Darl uses to describe Jewel and the horse also heightens the immediacy of the scene. However, I am less concerned with how the effect is achieved than with the effect itself. This passage establishes two important facts about Darl to be amplified in the rest of the novel: he is acutely aware of Jewel, particularly insofar as Jewel's relationship with his horse is concerned, and he has a sort of clairvoyance, an ability to "see" both the actions and the thoughts of others, even when he is himself absent from the scene he is describing.[19]

The first indication of hostility between Darl and Jewel appears in Darl's third section. Although he is sure that a storm is approaching, Darl tries to persuade his father and Jewel that one more load of wood should be hauled. Jewel twice tells him to shut up, and seems to be trying to ignore the imminence of his mother's death. Perhaps because of Darl's persistence, and perhaps because he is unwilling to face the fact that his mother may die before they return, Jewel finally agrees to go with Darl for the wood. It is later confirmed that Darl's motive in urging the trip was to separate Jewel from his mother at the moment of her death, and that he was relying on the coming storm to delay them long enough for this to happen. Darl's deliberate manipulation of his brother seems an unwarranted cruelty, yet it quickly becomes clear that there is a reason for Darl's hostility. He says enviously of Jewel, "He is a head taller than any of the rest of us, always was. I told them that's why ma always whipped him and petted him more. . . . That's why she named him Jewel I told them" (*AILD*, p. 17). Darl's comment suggests that Jewel is their mother's favourite, that he is the child she has "whipped and petted" more than the others as a result of her greater emotional involvement with him. Thus Darl's response to his fraternal family past is shown to be marked by mixed envy, admiration, and resentment of Jewel arising from his conviction that Addie is more emotionally attached to Jewel than to himself or any of the other children.

The nature of Darl's relationship with another member of his family is revealed in Dewey Dell's first section. As shown by his earlier description of Jewel and the horse, Darl has an extraordinary form of perception which allows him to "see" things without actually witnessing them. It is this ability which has aroused Dewey Dell's hostility, for Darl knows her secret--that she is pregnant. Not only does he know without seeing, but he is able to tell her without speaking that he knows. A sort of mental telepathy exists between Darl and Dewey Dell which enables them to communicate without words, and thus Darl is able to privately taunt her with his knowledge. Dewey Dell naturally resents the fact that Darl knows her embarrassing secret, and her hostility is increased by her sense of a hovering, all-seeing, all-knowing presence from which nothing can be hidden. In spite of the apparent closeness of their unusual rapport, Darl and Dewey Dell have little sympathy for each other, and the dominant tone of this fraternal relationship is one of hostility.

At the close of Dewey Dell's section she relates an unspoken conversation which took place between herself and Darl. This occurrence has already been described by Cora Tull, who concluded that Darl's silent presence at the door of Addie's room was evidence of a bond of mutual love between mother and son. However, Dewey Dell reveals what actually [illegible]k place, and what Cora cannot of course know. Darl told her without speaking that their mother was going to die before he and Jewel got back with the wood, and that he was taking Jewel with him anyway. Significantly, when Dewey Dell learned of the nearness of Addie's death she did not wonder why Darl was leaving at such a time, but instead asked why he was taking Jewel. Clearly, the implication is that for some reason it is more important for Jewel to be with his mother at her death than for Darl to be there. This, combined with Darl's claim that Jewel is Addie's favourite, suggests jealousy as the motive for Darl's determined efforts to separate Jewel from his mother.

In Darl's fourth section it becomes clear that he deliberately antagonizes the two members of his family with whom he is in conflict. His repeated question, "'Do you know she is going to die, Jewel?'" (AILD, p. 38), suggests that Jewel's attachment to his mother is stronger than his outward actions would indicate, and that Darl knows this. Again it seems likely that it is jealousy of Jewel's close relationship with Addie which prompts Darl to cruelty, as he torments Jewel by constantly reminding him of her impending death. He torments Dewey Dell in a similar way, although without speaking, by repeatedly reminding her of his secret knowledge about her. In short, Darl deliberately attacks what he knows to be Jewel's and Dewey Dell's vulnerable points, ruthlessly and unsympathetically forcing them to face unpleasant realities they would like to pretend did not exist. By forcing them to recognize his unique powers of perception and foresight in this way, Darl is also forcing them to recognize his individuality; thus, an attempt at self-definition may also be an element in his response to his fraternal family past. Surely some motive other than mere antagonism must be behind Darl's persistent taunting of Jewel and Dewey Dell, especially as in the latter case there is no clue as to why the conflict should have come into being in the first place.

Just as Darl's display of his clairvoyant powers may be seen as an attempt to assert his individuality, and thus his identity, so those powers in turn may be seen as resulting from the unusual nature of his sense of self. André Bleikasten puts it a little too strongly when he says of Darl, ". . . his mind can range freely and identify with any other mind it encounters on its way. Darl can become anyone because he is nothing himself."[20] It is doubtful if Darl can "become anyone" at will, as Bleikasten states, and to say that he is "nothing" is certainly an exaggeration. Yet it does seem possible that the precariousness of Darl's sense of identity could have produced a form of consciousness which manifests itself by penetrating other identities through the powers of clairvoyance and mental telepathy. Commenting upon Darl's difficulty in establishing his own physical existence, Olga Vickery remarks that ". . . the same absence of defining and limiting outline permits Darl to penetrate the minds of others and to intuit those secret thoughts of which they themselves are scarcely aware."[21] In short, although Darl's powers of perception are unnatural, even bizarre, they are perfectly consistent with a state of mind which lacks a sense of self upon which to focus.

Darl's fifth section provides a further example of his clairvoyant powers as he describes the scene at his mother's death-bed while he is himself miles away with Jewel. The accuracy of Darl's account is carefully substantiated by the repetition of certain details by other people who were also present at Addie's death. For example, at the beginning of the section Darl relates how Addie called to Cash from the window, and in his account she uses the same words and speaks in the same tone of voice described by Dr. Peabody at the close of the preceding section. Also, at the end of his account Darl imagines Dewey Dell mentally imploring Dr. Peabody, "You could do so much for me if you just would" (AILD, p. 50), and at the beginning of Dewey Dell's next section she reflects, "He could do so much for me if he just would" (AILD, p. 56). Thus the reader can hardly refuse to accept Darl's account of Addie's death and his later description of the finishing of the coffin as accurate.[22]

Two important clues as to the nature of Darl's fraternal past and present are to be found in his fifth section, which he narrates clairvoyantly. As the family gathers beside her death-bed, further evidence of Addie's partiality for Jewel appears: Dewey Dell interprets her mother's urgent expression and declares, "'It's Jewel she wants'" (AILD, p. 46). Darl's jealousy of his brother thus appears to be not without basis. Later in the section Darl describes Cash's calm reaction to his mother's death in a way which reveals a certain understanding of and sympathy for him. This is the first indication of the close bond of affection which exists between Cash and Darl, and which is gradually revealed in the course of the novel.

At the end of Darl's sixth section is an intricate passage in which he debates with himself the question of existence. Although his arguments and their implications are interesting in themselves, I must limit my discussion to the relationship of this passage to the larger issue of Darl's response to his family past. It is clear that Darl's concern with existence is related to his concern with his own identity: he first declares, "I dont know what I am," then goes a step farther and states, "I dont know if I am or not" (AILD, p. 76, emphasis added). He immediately draws a comparison between himself and Jewel, whom he rightly senses would never concern himself with such an intangible issue as the grounds of existence: "Jewel knows he is, because he does not know that he does not know whether he is or not" (AILD, p. 76). However, Darl goes on to suggest that there is a greater difference between himself and Jewel than simply their differing inclinations to contemplate metaphysical problems: he says of Jewel, "He cannot empty himself for sleep because he is not what he is and he is what he is not" (AILD, p. 76). As Darl has previously explained, to "empty yourself for sleep" is to become "is-not"; in other words, it is to temporarily lose one's sense of one's existence and identity. Jewel, he declares, cannot do this, and thus the great difference between them is a difference in their senses of their own identities.[23]

Furthermore, it is suggested that Darl sees Jewel's unshakable sense of identity to be a product of the special place Jewel has held in Addie's affections. After briefly debating the existence of the wagon and load of wood, Darl returns to more important and personal questions with the statement, "Yet the wagon _is_, because when the wagon is _was_, Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel _is_, so Addie Bundren must be" (_AILD_, p. 76). Although Darl's reasoning is somewhat less than logical, the exact meaning of this statement is less important than the link which is shown to exist in Darl's mind between the questions of existence and identity, and the relationship between Addie and Jewel. Calvin Bedient offers one interpretation of this part of the passage:

> . . . although for the present the wagon "_is_," it too will surrender its reality when it has carried Addie Bundren to Jefferson: 'when the wagon is _was_, Addie Bundren will not be.' For Darl, then, being springs _from_ the mother ('Jewel _is_, so Addie Bundren must be'). . . .[24]

However, it is significant that Darl does not establish his own existence in the same way he established Jewel's: ". . . I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am _is_" (_AILD_, p. 76). To Darl's mind, then, Jewel's existence and identity are assured by the fact that he is Addie's son, but the same does not necessarily hold true for himself. This suggests that his lack of a firm sense of identity is a result of some sort of lack in his relationship with his mother; in other words, it is a product of his response to his parental family past.

That Darl is aware of a difference between his and Jewel's relationships with Addie is made clear in his seventh section. At its beginning Darl again taunts Jewel, reminding him of his mother's death and implying that he is more attached to his horse than to his mother. Cruelly, he points out to Jewel the buzzards which have already begun to circle the corpse and sarcastically repeats, "'It's not your horse that's dead'" (AILD, p. 88). The inarticulate Jewel can only respond with his usual expression of hostility, "'Goddamn you.'" Then Darl declares, "I cannot love my mother because I have no mother. Jewel's mother is a horse" (AILD, p. 89). The first part of this statement is quite straightforward: Darl explicitly states what has already been suggested--that he has been deprived of the normal emotional relationship between mother and son. He is disowned, motherless, and therefore unable in turn to respond to Addie as his mother. His statement that Jewel's mother is a horse, however, requires more careful attention.

Darl immediately follows this strange statement with a description of Jewel and the horse which reminds the reader of the unusual relationship between them. As has already been shown, Jewel treats his horse with a degree of passion and possessiveness worthy of a human relationship. Olga Vickery remarks, ". . . [Jewel] isolate[s] himself and it from all contact with others. No one except himself is permitted to feed, care for, or even touch it. In a sense, the horse perpetuates Addie's emotional relationship with Jewel."[25] As Vickery points out, the implication is that Jewel's relationship with his horse is to some extent a reflection of his relationship with his mother. In fact, even the odd mixture of abuse and affection in Jewel's treatment of the horse can be seen as parallel to the extra whippings and pettings which, according to Darl, he received from Addie.[26] What is certain is that Darl believes this to be the case, as is shown by his comment that Jewel's mother is a horse. In light of this further evidence of Addie's partiality for Jewel, it is hardly surprising that Darl should resent Jewel and express his resentment by referring to Jewel's inordinate attachment to his horse. In turn, the fact that Darl resents Jewel for his position as favourite child implies that Darl feels the lack of a mother and has emotional needs which his relationship with Addie has failed to fulfill.

Darl's eighth section contains further revelations of his fraternal and parental past and present. In an impatient fury, Jewel curses both Cash and Darl and single-handedly carries the coffin to the wagon. Although it is not explicitly stated, what Jewel is reacting to is the overpowering smell emanating from the coffin: he is described by Darl as green-faced and cursing in a half-suffocated voice. Jewel's responses indicate that he is greatly upset by this repulsive and unmistakable evidence of his mother's death, but, as usual, his emotions find expression only in curses and physical violence. Darl seems to understand how his brother feels when he describes the coffin as a straw borne upon "the furious tide of Jewel's despair" (AILD, p. 92).

Darl seems to share to a lesser--or at least, to a less noticeable--extent Jewel's sense of outrage at what is happening to their mother. In describing the raising of the coffin, Darl imagines it clinging to the ground as if Addie is ashamed of the horror she has become: "For an instant it resists, as though volitional, as though within it her pole-thin body clings furiously, even though dead, to a sort of modesty, as she would have tried to conceal a soiled garment that she could not prevent her body soiling" (AILD, p. 91). That Darl should describe the coffin in this way suggests that he too is conscious of the ignominy and disgrace to which his mother has been reduced, and that he therefore to some extent shares Jewel's emotions, in spite of the hostility between them.

The section immediately following, narrated by Vardaman, contains a conversation between Darl and Vardaman at the beginning of the trip to Jefferson. When Darl declares that Jewel's mother is a horse, Vardaman, immersed in his fantasy, replies that his mother is a fish, and then asks a crucial question, "'what is your ma, Darl?'" (AILD, p. 95). Darl's reply, "'I haven't got ere one.' . . . 'Because if I had one, it is was. And if it is was, it cant be is'" (AILD, p. 95), makes literal sense because his mother is in fact "was," or dead and no longer existing. However, it also echoes his earlier statement that he cannot love his mother because, in the figurative sense, he has no mother (see above, p. 95).

Darl's next statement reminds the reader of his lack of a sense of his own existence and identity; declaring that his mother is "was," Darl argues, "'Then I am not'" (AILD, p. 95). The implications of this statement and of the dialogue from this point onward are aptly summarized by Peter Swiggart:

> Believing that he lacks a true mother, Darl argues that he has no personal existence, no isness. . . . Vardaman reasons that since Darl is his brother, then Darl too must exist. 'But you are, Darl,' Vardaman states. The boy intends "are" as a second-person singular verb, implying a single existent. But Darl chooses to interpret this "are" as standing for a plural "you are" in which both himself and Jewel are included. Thus Darl cannot have a mother, because "are" (meaning plurality here) would be 'too many for one woman to foal.' In other words Addie

> can have only one real son. The use of the word "foal" associates Addie with Jewel's horse and implies that she, like any mare, can nurse only one offspring at a time.[27]

Thus their brief conversation provides further evidence of what has already been suggested about Darl's responses to his fraternal and parental pasts: his lack of a definite sense of existence and identity results from the inadequacy of his relationship with his mother, and he envies and resents Jewel for occupying the place in his mother's affections which he has himself been denied.

Darl's eleventh section is the story of how Jewel acquired his horse. The importance of the horse for Jewel has already been noted (see above, p. 95): the relationship between them can be seen as a reflection of Jewel's relationship with his mother. Here a further explanation is given for Jewel's intensely possessive attitude as it becomes clear that he acquired the horse at the cost of considerable personal sacrifice. This section also provides further insights into Darl's fraternal family past, as his relationships with Cash and Jewel are illuminated by his response to Jewel's supposed illness. In discussing the mystery of Jewel's behaviour with Cash, Darl displays an understanding of and sympathy with Cash's sentiments which provides further proof of a close fraternal relationship between them. In addition, Darl seems to share Cash's uneasiness about Jewel's welfare, particularly when they conjecture that an affair with a married woman may be the cause of Jewel's nightly absences. In short, Darl's concern about Jewel and his sharing of the burden of concern and secrecy with Cash are typical responses of a brother in those circumstances. Clearly, Darl is not an outcast; he is very much a part of the fraternal relationships within the family, in spite of serious conflicts, and shares in the family's problems and worries.

Of course, the relationships between Darl and his brothers portrayed in this section are the relationships as they existed in the past. However, Darl's subsequent account of the crossing of the flooded river reveals that they have remained basically the same up to the present. The bond of understanding and sympathy between himself and Cash is again indicated as he describes the glance they exchange before attempting to ford the river:

> . . . he and I look at one another with long probing looks, looks that plunge unimpeded through one another's eyes and into the ultimate secret place where for an instant Cash and Darl crouch flagrant and unabashed in all the old terror and the old foreboding, alert and secret and without shame (AILD, p. 135).

Furthermore, Darl again shares Cash's concern about Jewel, who is attempting to swim his horse across the river. He reassures Cash by reminding him that Jewel can swim, and then the two of them recall with unmistakable affection how small Jewel was at his birth:

> When he was born, he had a bad time of it. Ma would sit in the lamp-light, holding him on a pillow on her lap. . . .
> 'That pillow was longer than him,' Cash says. . . .
> 'That's right,' I say. 'Neither his feet nor his head would reach the end of it' (AILD, p. 137).

It is clear that Darl has continued to feel and act as a brother toward Cash, and even toward Jewel. It is also clear that he is still involved in the family's difficulties and, in this case, in the dangers it faces. Although he is later criticized by Vernon Tull for abandoning the wagon and swimming to shore, what is significant is that Darl is in the wagon in the first place. That he chooses to remain to help Cash and Jewel get the coffin across the river rather than taking the bridge with the rest is evidence of his commitment to his brothers and to the family's cause.

One other point subsequently clarified is first raised in the story of Jewel and his horse when Darl asserts that it was then that he "found out something" about his mother and Jewel. After describing Addie's concern about Jewel and her attempts to cover up his neglect of his work, Darl states:

> And that may have been when I first found it out, that Addie Bundren should be hiding anything she did, who had tried to teach us that deceit was such that, in a world where it was, nothing else could be very bad or very important. . . . And I knew that she was hating herself for that deceit and hating Jewel because she had to love him so that she had to act the deceit (AILD, p. 123).

When Darl learns that his mother will sacrifice her most cherished ideals for Jewel's sake, he realizes the full intensity of the unique relationship between them. However, he goes on to hint at something beyond this confirmation of Addie's preference of Jewel over the rest of her children:

> That night I found ma sitting beside the bed where [Jewel] was sleeping, in the dark. She cried hard, maybe because she had to cry so quiet; maybe because she felt the same way about tears she did about deceit, hating herself for doing it, hating him because she had to. And then I knew that I knew. I knew that as plain on that day as I knew about Dewey Dell on that day (AILD, p. 129).

It is worth noting that in this account Darl shows understanding of his mother's character, and even a degree of sympathy for her, in spite of his awareness of her partiality for Jewel. The nature of the secret knowledge Darl has acquired is not disclosed at this point, but his reference to the clairvoyant powers which enabled him to discover Dewey Dell's secret suggests that he knows something about the relationship between his mother and Jewel which is hidden from normal powers of perception.

What this "something" is finally becomes clear in Addie's section. The one occasion on which she speaks forms the single most important section of the novel, for not only is it revealed that Jewel is the child of an adulterous relationship, but the elements of Addie's character and experience which have shaped her responses to her husband and children are also laid bare. Thus Addie's section both explains the antagonism between Darl and Jewel and reveals how the circumstances producing that antagonism came about in the first place. Her section is at the center of the novel's thematic development, for it shows how the family's past has influenced the present by shaping the fraternal and parental relationships.

At the beginning of Addie's section is the single reference in the novel to what might be called an ancestral family past. However, the influence of Addie's father upon her seems to have been mainly indirect, for it was not so much the relationship between them as the philosophy he espoused which affected Addie's response to life. His gloomy conviction that the reason for living is to get ready to stay dead for a long time seems to have increased Addie's determination to find a better reason, to find a truly meaningful way in which to live:

> And when I would have to look at [the school children] day after day, each with his and her secret and selfish thought, and blood strange to each other blood and strange to mine, and think that this seemed to be the only way I could get ready to stay dead, I would hate my father for having ever planted me (AILD, pp. 161-162).

Addie's dissatisfaction arose from her frustrated need for intimate communion with another human being. She admits that she used to enjoy whipping her pupils, for it was a means of establishing a direct relationship with them: ". . . I would think with each blow of the switch: Now you are aware of me! Now I am something in your secret and selfish life . . ." (AILD, p. 162). Her passionate need to "be something" in the life of another individual betrays her into a marriage which fails utterly to fulfill this need. However, she does find in her relationship with her first child the degree of intimacy with another human being she desires; Addie declares, ". . . my aloneness . . . had never been violated until Cash came" (AILD, p. 164).

Once Addie has achieved the desired communion with another, she rejects everything which seems to her to fall short of it. Words, she decides, "dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at" (AILD, p. 163). She rejects her husband because her relationship with him seems to consist only of a word, "love," which she feels to be "just a shape to fill a lack" (AILD, p. 164). It is direct, physical experiences, not words, which are meaningful for Addie, and her relationship with Cash, originating in such an experience, satisfies her need for intimacy; as Olga Vickery expresses it, "Through the act of giving birth she becomes part of the endless cycle of creation and destruction, discovering that, for the first time, her 'aloneness had been violated and then made whole again by the violation.'"[28]

Because Addie has concluded that her relationship with her husband is no more than a meaningless word, she feels betrayed when she discovers that she is pregnant a second time. She declares, "I believed that I would kill Anse. It was as though he had tricked me, hidden within a word like within a paper screen and struck me in the back through it" (AILD, p. 164). As a result of this sense of betrayal, ". . . her second child, Darl, comes as the ultimate and unforgivable outrage,"[29] and she rejects him as completely as she rejected the relationship which produced him. Her refusal to enter into a mother-son relationship with Darl is thus shown to result from the failure of her marriage, which in turn resulted from the incompatibility of Anse's rather shallow and superficial nature with her own passionate craving for personal intimacy.

Similarly, Jewel's position as Addie's favourite child is also a result of these factors. Because her husband has become for her merely "the shape and echo of his word" (AILD, p. 166), Addie seeks the intimate communion she desires in an adulterous relationship with Whitfield. For a time she believes that she has found the true reason for living: "I believed that the reason was the duty to the alive, to the terrible blood, the red bitter flood boiling through the land" (AILD, p. 166). This relationship is meaningful for Addie, and not just an empty word. It is all the more meaningful because Whitfield is a minister and therefore "the instrument ordained by God who created the sin, to sanctify that sin He had created" (AILD, p. 166). Jewel, the product of the adulterous relationship, not only fulfills her need for communion with another, but also becomes the center of meaning in her life, for she sees him as a symbol of both her sin and the redemption of her life from meaninglessness: "'He is my cross and he will be my salvation'" (AILD, p. 160). It is therefore not surprising that Jewel has become of far greater importance to her than anyone else, even Cash.

Addie's section thus reveals that the conflict between Darl and Jewel has not been of their own making, but is an inevitable result of their mother's passionate and determined nature--a nature which insisted upon ideal communion between individuals and would not accept anything which fell short of it. Darl's motherlessness, which so greatly affects his sense of identity, has arisen from exactly the same cause. Thus for Darl, both the way in which he sees himself (i.e., as having no real identity and of little worth) and his responses to present realities (i.e., his hostility toward Jewel) have been virtually dictated by Addie's parental influence.

Furthermore, it is clear that the remaining members of the family have also, though to a lesser extent, been shaped by the family's past in that their relationships to Addie and to each other have inevitably been influenced by her character. She declares, "I gave Anse Dewey Dell to negative Jewel. Then I gave him Vardaman to replace the child I had robbed him of. And now he has three children that are his and not mine" (AILD, p. 168). In other words, Addie has rejected Dewey Dell and Vardaman as completely as she rejected Darl; she has refused to feel and act as a mother toward these three children because she has decided that they are not hers. Similarly, her rejection of Anse and the promise she forces him to make to her also result from her desire for meaning in life and communion with others. Knowing that for Anse reality lies in empty words, Addie binds him with the promise to bury her in Jefferson in order to accomplish her revenge upon him for failing her. At the same time she binds all of the family to the physical reality of her corpse. Thus the action of the novel, both physical and psychological, has as its center the coffin which symbolizes the family's past.

Following the revelations in Addie's section, Darl's thoughts and actions unfold in a manner which seems, if not inevitable, at least clearly anticipated. His grasp of external reality, always tenuous, becomes more and more so as he endures day after day of the physical and emotional ordeal of accompanying his mother's decaying corpse to Jefferson.

The funeral journey is clearly a painful reality from which he would escape if he could; at one point he thinks wistfully, "If you could just ravel out into time. That would be nice. It would be nice if you could just ravel out into time" (AILD, p. 198). He finds one outlet for his emotions in taunting Jewel. Although previously he made only oblique references to Jewel's relationships with his mother and his horse, he now asks outright, "'. . . whose son are you?' . . . 'Your mother was a horse, but who was your father, Jewel?'" (AILD, p. 202). Darl's increasingly explicit remarks may or may not indicate increasing antagonism toward Jewel; what is certain is that they are primarily the result of mounting desperation and a growing lack of self-control. Jewel responds, of course, with ever greater hostility, answering Darl's insinuations by calling him a "'goddamn lying son of a bitch'" (AILD, p. 202).

Another way in which Darl tries to cope with an unpleasant reality is by fantasizing. He declares that his mother is talking in her coffin, and, accompanied by Vardaman, goes to listen. An interesting exchange takes place between them, narrated by Vardaman:

> 'What is she saying, Darl?' I say. 'Who is she talking to?'
> 'She's talking to God,' Darl says. 'She is calling on Him to help her.'
> 'What does she want Him to do?' I say.
> 'She wants Him to hide her away from the sight of man,' Darl says.
> 'Why does she want to hide her away from the sight of man, Darl?'
> 'So she can lay down her life,' Darl says (AILD, pp. 204-205).

What is important here is not whether Darl is insane and actually believes that his dead mother is talking to him, or is merely exercising his imagination, but rather the nature of the request which he attributes to her. The belief that his mother would wish her dead and decaying body to be "hidden away from the sight of man" is important because it suggests a reason for his subsequent action in setting fire to the barn in which the coffin is sheltered.

Apart from this remark, which the reader gets at second-hand from Vardaman, Darl provides no explanation for his actions. As a result, a variety of motives have been attributed to Darl in order to explain why he sets fire to the barn. One is that he is seeking vengeance upon the mother who rejected him. However, this seems improbable because, as I have shown, his thoughts and memories of her are marked by understanding, and even sympathy, rather than bitterness and hatred. Another suggestion is that he is putting an end to a journey which he sees as absurd and pointless; however, this seems unlikely in view of the evidence I have presented of his earlier commitment to the family's cause. A third explanation is that his act is simply a defiance of Jewel and an expression of his opposition to him, but in spite of Darl's obvious hostility toward Jewel, the text as a whole does not support the contention that he hates Jewel and would go to any lengths to thwart him. Finally, a less improbable conjecture is that Darl's explanation that his mother wants to be hidden away from the sight of man should be taken at face value; in other words, it is merely common human decency which prompts Darl to "get shut of her in some clean way," as Cash later puts it (AILD, p. 223). However, this hardly explains why Darl should be found after the fire lying on the coffin he has tried to destroy, crying. The reason Darl tries to destroy his mother's corpse must be more complex than any of these explanations.

André Bleikasten comes closest to expressing what I believe to be Darl's motive in setting fire to the barn when he suggests that Darl's action can be seen as "a last and desperate attempt to take possession of his mother."[30] Although Bleikasten does not explain exactly what he means by this, the evidence of the text seems to me to support the hypothesis that Darl's act is a release of frustrated emotion. The fact that Addie's rejection of him has had such a profound influence upon Darl's life indicates that he has been affected emotionally by it. Could his decision to destroy his mother's corpse not therefore be a final attempt to assert some sort of relationship with her, to "take possession" of her now that she can no longer reject him, and to express his repressed feelings toward her? And can those feelings be of hatred, when he believes that by destroying her corpse he is doing what she would have wanted him to do? In short, I believe that the whole of the evidence I have noted most strongly supports the conclusion that Darl acts out of loyalty and emotional attachment to his mother in setting fire to the barn. One could say that Darl is fulfilling what he imagines to be his mother's last request, just as Jewel is trying to carry out what _he_ believes to be her last request by conducting her coffin to Jefferson.

One explanation of Darl's action I have not considered is the possibility that he is insane to the point of acting without motive and without any real awareness of what he is doing. Such an explanation is implausible for two reasons. One is that Cash, who seems to be the least imaginative member of the family, views Darl's arson as a moral act: ". . . when Darl seen that it looked like one of us would have to do something, I can almost believe he done right in a way" (_AILD_, p. 223). Clearly, Cash is convinced that Darl acted deliberately and with full knowledge of what he was doing, and although he approves Darl's _motive_ as morally right, he is at last forced to condemn the means he chose--setting fire to the barn--as "crazy" because Darl acted with complete disregard for the rights and safety of others. The second factor is that although Darl's "madness" has been prepared for in the novel, there has been no indication that he is violent, destructive, or unconscious of his own acts. Throughout there have been scattered references to the fact that Darl is generally regarded as "a bit queer" by his neighbors, but it seems this judgement is due more to Darl's detachment from external reality than to any dangerous or offensive action on his part. As Cash declares, "I see all the while how folks could say he was queer, but that was the very reason couldn't nobody hold it personal. It was like he was outside of it too, same as you, and getting mad at it would be kind of like getting mad at a mud-puddle that splashed you when you stepped in it" (AILD, pp. 226-227).

Although I am convinced that insanity is not the explanation for Darl's action in setting fire to the barn, there is no doubt that he does finally become truly mad. It has often been argued that Darl's betrayal by his family precipitates his final breakdown, and it does seem that this may be one of the factors involved. Although only a few hours previously Darl leapt to the defence of his family's cause and his brother Jewel against a knife-wielding stranger, when the crisis comes all of the members of the family agree that he must be locked away as a madman. Dewey Dell and Jewel rejoice in this opportunity for retaliation against Darl, the former attacking him and the latter exclaiming, "'Kill him. Kill the son of a bitch'" (AILD, p. 227). Even Cash, with whom Darl feels the closest bond, has unwillingly betrayed him; Darl gently reproaches him, "'I thought you would have told me.' . . . 'I never thought you wouldn't have'" (AILD, p. 227). When he is at last on the train to Jackson, Darl, seeing his family for the last time from the window, seems to express his sense of betrayal: "Darl is our brother, our brother Darl. Our brother Darl in a cage in Jackson . . ." (AILD, p. 244).

However, Darl's betrayal by his brothers and sister and exclusion from the family can hardly be the cause of his final insanity. As I have shown, in the course of the journey both Darl's grasp upon reality and his self-control have become progressively weaker. His final madness is the inevitable outcome of the gradual disintegration of his personality which has been shown to be taking place throughout the novel. In the final section narrated by Darl, his total loss of self-control is shown by his uncontrollable laughter, and his complete detachment from external reality is indicated by his bizarre argument that "because the state's money has a face to each backside and a backside to each face," his guards, who are seated facing each other, "are riding on the state's money which is incest" (AILD, p. 244). Furthermore, in this section Darl refers to himself only in the third person: "Darl has gone to Jackson. They put him on the train, laughing . . ." (AILD, p. 243). As Cleanth Brooks remarks, ". . . at this point the disintegration of Darl's personality has become complete. Darl now sees himself as object as well as ego--as object rather than ego."[31] To view oneself "as object rather than ego" is to completely lose one's sense of identity, and this is what has at last happened to Darl.

* * * * *

Thus Darl is yet another character who is influenced by his family past to the extent that both the way in which he sees himself and his responses to present realities are dictated by it. His almost complete lack of a sense of his own identity is shown to result from the influence of his parental family past--specifically, from his mother's emotional rejection of him. Darl's realization that Addie vastly prefers Jewel to himself, in spite of the fact that Jewel is the product of adultery while he is a legitimate child, has seriously damaged his view of himself. As a result, Darl not only does not know _who_ he is, but also wonders _if_ he is; in other words, he questions not only his identity, but his very existence. Darl has found himself in the unenviable position of being an outcast from his mother's affections when it is really Jewel who does not "belong" to the family. His sense of self-worth has been affected by this and he feels that Jewel must be superior to himself to have so monopolized his mother's favour; his sense of inferiority is evident from the mixture of envy, admiration, affection, and resentment he displays toward Jewel.

Darl's responses to present realities result directly from the influence of his fraternal and parental pasts. He expresses his jealousy of Jewel through unceasing hostility, yet cannot overcome an admiring affection for him, and in spite of his mother's refusal to acknowledge him while she was alive, he is driven to act by an emotional attachment to her which continues even after her death. The physical and psychological ordeal of the funeral journey, operating upon a state of mind already unstable as a result of his responses to his family past, gradually brings about the complete disintegration of Darl's personality. Thus the influences, both direct and indirect, of Darl's family past finally affect his perceptions to such an extent that he becomes insane. Darl is destroyed psychologically by his response to his family past.

* * * * *

It has already been noted that in As I Lay Dying the circumstances of the family's past to which the characters respond are circumstances firmly rooted in physical reality. Darl's inner conflict results, not from any abstract concern with honour or virtue or proper behaviour, but from the plain fact that his mother has rejected her other offspring in favour of Jewel, the child conceived in adultery. The way in which the parental past (i.e., Addie's attitudes toward her children) influences the fraternal past (i.e., Darl's attitude toward Jewel) is thus unmistakably obvious. As a result of the clearness with which the link between the family's past and the characters' responses to it is demonstrated, the reader does not have to rely upon mere implication, but is explicitly shown how and why the characters are influenced by the family's past. This is one factor contributing to the clear and effective presentation of the theme of "family past" which is achieved in the novel.

The unusual structure of As I Lay Dying, with its alternating and multiple points of view, further enhances the clearness of the thematic development. Cleanth Brooks notes that

> The author does not commit us to the experience and sensibility of one character whom we see only from the inside and whose world we apprehend only from his point of view. Instead, Faulkner has attempted the much more difficult role of putting us in some kind of sympathetic rapport with an individual character and yet constantly forcing this character back into the total perspective of the world--the world of the family and the larger world of the community.[32]

This manipulation of point of view helps to make Darl a character whom the reader can understand, for it enables the reader to view him from a variety of angles.

In conclusion, the presentation of the theme of "family past" in this novel is at least as effective as in The Sound and the Fury, and vastly more so than in Sartoris. Furthermore, the theme in As I Lay Dying is developed clearly and consistently throughout the whole of the novel, rather than being concentrated in only one section and an appendix, as in The Sound and the Fury. It is therefore my conclusion that of the three novels, As I Lay Dying represents Faulkner's most skilful and most complete development of the theme of "family past."

CHAPTER V

In the preceding three chapters it has been my purpose to trace the development of the theme of "family past" and evaluate the effectiveness of the overall presentation of the theme in three of Faulkner's early novels. It will be my purpose in this concluding chapter to compare my findings in order to discover the most important similarities and differences in the ways in which the theme of "family past" is presented in these novels. I will do this by comparing both the methods by which the influence of the family past is demonstrated and the techniques used to develop the theme as a whole. My goal will be to prove that in Sartoris, The Sound and the Fury, and As I Lay Dying it is essentially the same theme which is developed, but that it is developed by means of significantly different--and increasingly effective--methods and techniques.

That it is basically the same theme which is developed in all of these novels has, I believe, become increasingly evident in the course of the last three chapters. It has become clear that in each novel there is one major character who is influenced by his family's past to the extent that his sense of personal identity, estimation of his own worth, and responses to the present realities of his life are virtually dictated by it. There are, of course, slight variations in emphasis. For Bayard Sartoris it is his estimation of his own worth which is most seriously affected by his response to his family past, for he has become convinced that he is a worthless coward because he is not as fearless as his brother and ancestors. For Quentin Compson it is the way in which he perceives and responds to present realities which is the most outstanding feature of his response to his family past, as is evident from the complexity of the code of behaviour he has adopted. For Darl Bundren it is his sense of personal identity which is most completely governed by his response to his family past, and he constantly seeks to define himself and establish a sense of his own identity. In spite of these variations in emphasis, all three characters are influenced in each of these three ways, and all three are ultimately destroyed by their inability to reconcile their responses to their families' pasts with the circumstances of their present lives.

Furthermore, all three of the characters influenced in these ways are subject to the same types of influences. Bayard, Quentin, and Darl are "heir" figures in that they are subject to the influences of three different types of family past arising from three separate generations. In each novel there is a fraternal relationship, either wholly in the past or continuing into the present, which has the most direct and most powerful influence upon the individual. In each novel there is also a parental relationship, in which again past may overlap with present, and which has a significant influence upon the fraternal relationship, and thus upon the individual. Finally, there is in each novel an ancestral past which has some degree of influence upon the individual through his fraternal and parental relationships.[1] Although the relative importance of these three types of influences varies from novel to novel, in all three the characters' perceptions and responses are dictated by the combined influences arising from these three aspects of their families' pasts.

However, although the same basic idea is developed as a major theme in all of these novels, there are significant variations in the ways in which it is embodied in each novel. To be more specific, although Bayard, Quentin, and Darl are subject to the same basic types of influences and are affected by them in the same fundamental ways, the exact nature of the influence upon the character is slightly different in each novel. Between the first of these novels and the last, two major changes take place in the way in which the family past is shown to influence the individual. Furthermore, these changes in Faulkner's method of demonstrating the influence of the family past increase the effectiveness of the overall presentation of the theme.

The first change which occurs is that the different aspects of the family's past cover a progressively shorter time-span. In Sartoris Young Bayard is separated from his parental family past by two generations (as it is his grandfather and great-aunt who replace his natural parents), and from his ancestral past by three generations or more. The remoteness in time of these two aspects of his family past increases the difficulty of demonstrating their influences upon him, and the novel's thematic development is weakened by the lack of a firmly-established link between Bayard's ancestral and parental pasts and his fraternal past. In The Sound and the Fury Quentin is separated by only one generation from his parental family past, and, unlike Bayard's, his fraternal family past is focussed upon a living individual. As a result, the influence of the parental relationship upon the fraternal one can be much more clearly and effectively demonstrated to the reader. However, Quentin's ancestral family past is as remote in time as Bayard's, and its influence upon him only becomes clear in retrospect when the reader turns to the additional information provided by the Appendix. In As I Lay Dying the influences of the fraternal and parental relationships are even more clearly apparent, since Darl is in daily contact with all except one of the individuals who represent these two aspects of his family past. Furthermore, the single exception, the mother who dies near the beginning of the novel, continues to have a powerful influence upon him throughout. The ancestral family past is here reduced to a position of relative insignificance,[2] and thus the time-span of the family's past in this third novel is the shortest of all, for it really covers only two generations. As a result, the influences upon the individual of the different aspects of his family past can be presented with greater clarity and emphasis, and this is part of the reason why the development of the theme of "family past" is most effective in As I Lay Dying.

The second change which occurs within these three novels in Faulkner's method of demonstrating the influence of the family's past upon the individual is that the characters' ruling obsessions become increasingly linked to physical reality. At one extreme is Young Bayard, whose obsessive need to prove his fearlessness is based solely upon an assumption about the nature of courage which cannot be tested by any physical means. Partly as a result of the highly abstract basis of his obsession, its importance as a motivating factor in his actions does not emerge with sufficient clarity and emphasis. Quentin Compson occupies the middle ground, for although his obsession is also based upon an assumption, an assumption about the nature of honour, there is an obvious link between his obsessive concern for his family's honour and physical reality. Because Quentin has equated his family's honour with the physical circumstance of his sister's virginity, both the nature of his obsession and the degree to which he is motivated by it are more clearly apparent to the reader. Finally, Darl Bundren represents the other extreme, for his obsession with his brother Jewel is entirely based upon physical reality. No assumptions or abstract principles are involved: Darl simply knows that Jewel is their mother's favourite child and that he was conceived in adultery. Darl's obsessive need to torment and oppose Jewel is therefore the result solely of his awareness of his mother's partiality for Jewel, which in turn is a result of the circumstances of Jewel's birth. Thus the nature of Darl's obsession and the extent to which his responses are influenced by it are obvious to the reader; this is another factor which helps to make the presentation of the theme of "family past" in this novel clearer and more effective than in Sartoris and The Sound and the Fury.

In addition to these two changes in Faulkner's method of demonstrating the influence of the family's past upon the individual, an important change also takes place in the techniques he uses to develop the theme as a whole. This is a change in his handling of characterization and point of view--a change which also results in an increasingly effective presentation of the theme of "family past." In Sartoris Faulkner uses the third-person omniscient point of view and portrays Young Bayard mainly through depiction of his actions. The reader is thus allowed only a few brief glimpses of Bayard's inner state, and is often in doubt as to his thoughts and feelings. As a result, the motivation for Bayard's actions is too often not sufficiently clear to the reader, and because of this both his characterization and the development of the theme as a whole are weakened.

The Sound and the Fury is narrated from the first-person point of view, and Quentin is characterized entirely through depiction of his inner state. His thoughts and feelings and the motivation for his actions are thus much more clearly apparent to the reader. However, it seems to me that Faulkner realized that certain aspects of Quentin's response to his family past could not be effectively presented from his viewpoint, for Faulkner refers to Quentin again in the Appendix, employing the omniscient point of view. Furthermore, it is only when the reader is allowed this external view of Quentin that the influence of his ancestral family past upon him becomes clear and the thematic development is completed.

My theory that Faulkner perceived the need for both an inner and an external view of the individual in order to clearly portray his responses to his family past is supported by his handling of characterization and point of view in As I Lay Dying. The alternation of first-person narratives told from the viewpoints of a number of characters allows the reader to view Darl from his own point of view as well as from the points of view of other individuals. Thus Darl is seen from both the inside and the outside, and is characterized through depiction of his actions as well as of his thoughts and feelings. The unusual structure of the novel produces in effect a combination of the first-person point of view with the third-person objective point of view insofar as the reader's perception of Darl is concerned. It seems to me obvious that Faulkner, having experimented with characterization from the third-person point of view in Sartoris and from the first-person point of view in The Sound and the Fury, attempted a combination of the two in As I Lay Dying, and succeeded brilliantly. Therefore I conclude that this change in Faulkner's handling of the techniques of characterization and point of view is yet another improvement in his development of the theme of "family past."

* * * * *

My final evaluation of the presentations of the theme of "family past" in the novels I have examined is that the theme is presented least effectively in Sartoris and most effectively in As I Lay Dying.[3] Furthermore, my examination has shown that both the methods by which the influence of the family past upon the individual is demonstrated, and the techniques by which the theme as a whole is presented, change and improve between the first of these novels and the last. My conclusion is therefore that these three novels represent William Faulkner's experimentation with and perfection of the development of the theme of "family past."

NOTES

Chapter I

[1] Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner, eds., Faulkner in the University: Class Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957-1958 (1959; rpt. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1977), p. 84.

[2] In selecting editions of these novels I have relied upon the authority of James B. Meriwether, "The Books of William Faulkner: A Guide for Students and Scholars," Mississippi Quarterly, 30, No. 3 (Summer, 1977), 417-428.

For The Sound and the Fury Meriwether lists as one of the reliable texts of the novel the 1967 Modern Library College Edition paperback which I have used. In addition, a note at the end of this text indicates that "The plates for the text of this new edition were produced photographically from a copy of the first printing, which has fewer errors than the 1946 setting."

For As I Lay Dying Meriwether lists as a reliable text the 1964 Vintage paperback edition which I have used. Also, a note on the dedication page of this text indicates that "The corrections in this edition are based on a collation, under the direction of James B. Meriwether, of the first edition and Faulkner's original manuscript and typescript."

Unfortunately, I was not able to choose a text for Sartoris in the same way. Meriwether lists as reliable texts for this novel the 1929 Harcourt and Brace first edition, the 1932 Chatto and Windus edition, the 1933 Grosset and Dunlap edition, and the 1961 Random House edition; however, none of these editions are contained in the library holdings of this university. I selected as my text the only edition readily available to me, the 1964 Signet-New American Library paperback. This text contains a foreword by Robert Cantwell and an afterword by Lawrance Thompson, and, as these two critics are both established scholars of Faulkner's works, I have taken their sanction of this edition as evidence of the reliability of the text. Finally, I have chosen Sartoris as my text for Faulkner's third novel rather than the original typescript version, Flags in the Dust, because the latter was not published until 1973, and, as a result, almost all of the scholarly criticism of the novel is based upon Sartoris.

[3] John L. Longley, Jr., The Tragic Mask: A Study of Faulkner's Heroes (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 11 (emphasis his).

Chapter II

[1] William Faulkner, Sartoris, Signet Classic edition (1929; rpt. New York: New American Library, 1964), p. 19. All subsequent references to S are to this edition, and will be given in the text, parenthetically, by title letter and page number.

[2] Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963; rpt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 103-104.

[3] Frederick J. Hoffman, William Faulkner (1961; rpt. New York: Twayne, 1966), p. 46.

[4] Hoffman, p. 47.

[5] Irving Howe, William Faulkner: A Critical Study (1951; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 34.

[6] Howe, p. 35.

[7] Irving Malin, William Faulkner: An Interpretation (1957; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1972), p. 12.

[8] Kenneth E. Richardson, Force and Faith in the Novels of William Faulkner (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 20.

[9] Richardson, pp. 21-22.

[10] James Gray Watson, "'The Germ of My Apocrypha': Sartoris and the Search for Form," Mosaic, 7, No. 1 (Fall, 1973), 18-19.

[11] Olga W. Vickery, The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. 26.

[12] Lawrance Thompson, Afterword, Sartoris, by William Faulkner, Signet Classic edition (1929; rpt. New York: New American Library, 1964), p. 309.

[13] Watson, p. 24.

[14] Watson, p. 23.

[15] Arnold Goldman, "Faulkner's Images of the Past: from Sartoris to The Unvanquished," Yearbook of English Studies, 8 (1978), 111.

[16] Peter Swiggart, The Art of Faulkner's Novels (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), p. 34, notes that Young Bayard's preoccupation with his brother, John Sartoris, is analogous to Old Bayard's preoccupation with his father, Col. John Sartoris. Pointing out the repetition of the name, Swiggart says of the two John Sartorises, "Although both figures are dead, their personalities control the thoughts of the living." It seems to me no coincidence that the two Bayards are first introduced to the reader in terms of their relationships to a John Sartoris, for it serves to emphasize the similarity of their situations, thereby suggesting the continuance of certain attitudes and responses from generation to generation in the Sartoris family. However, it must not be forgotten that the relationships are essentially different, as one is son to father, and the other is brother to brother.

[17] Vickery, p. 21, notes the close similarity between these two passages.

[18] T. H. Adamowski, "Bayard Sartoris: Mourning and Melancholia," Literature and Psychology, 23, No. 4 (1973), 152.

[19] Watson, p. 26.

[20] John W. Corrington, "Escape into Myth: The Long Dying of Bayard Sartoris," Recherches Anglaises et Américaines, 4 (1971), 40, as quoted in Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), p. 394.

[21] Corrington, 40, as quoted in Brooks, Yoknapatawpha and Beyond, p. 394.

[22] Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), pp. 394-395.

[23] Watson, p. 31.

Chapter III

[1] Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963; rpt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 334.

[2] Mark Spilka, "Quentin Compson's Universal Grief," Contemporary Literature, 11, No. 4 (Autumn, 1970), 465.

[3] Spilka, 465.

[4] Kenneth E. Richardson, Force and Faith in the Novels of William Faulkner (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 27.

[5] Richardson, p. 72.

[6] André Bleikasten, The Most Splendid Failure: Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 104.

[7] Bleikasten, pp. 111-112, bases this argument upon a comment Faulkner made at the University of Virginia when he was asked the reason for Quentin's failure:

> It was a--something had happened somewhere between the first Compson and Quentin. The first Compson was a bold ruthless man who came into Mississippi as a free forester to grasp where and when he could and wanted to, and established what should have been a princely line, and that line decayed.

Apart from the fact that an author is not necessarily the best critic of his work, it is obvious that Bleikasten has attached a meaning all of his own to Faulkner's words:

> If Faulkner is to be believed, Quentin's most redoubtable antagonist is none other than this pioneering ancestor, the long-dead founder of the family line. . . . if we follow the author's suggestions, the overpowering paternal figure with whom Quentin is confronted is not at all his real father: it is embodied in the daunting features of the founding father [Quentin MacLachan Compson]. . . . Mr. Compson's weakness may be said to derive primarily from the fact that he too, just like his son, is a powerless hostage of this ancestral shade.

A comparison of Faulkner's comment with Bleikasten's quickly shows that the latter bears little resemblance to what the author actually said. Bleikasten offers no further evidence, textual or otherwise, to support his assertion.

[8] Olga W. Vickery, The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. 37.

[9] Vickery, p. 38.

[10] John W. Hunt, William Faulkner: Art in Theological Tension (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1965), p. 46.

[11] Hunt, p. 48.

[12] Hunt, p. 48.

[13] Throughout my examination of Quentin's section I have relied upon the "Chronology of Scenes" and "Guide to the Scene Shifts" provided by Edmond L. Volpe, A Reader's Guide to William Faulkner (New York: Noonday Press, 1964), pp. 365-377, in identifying the events and points in time to which Quentin's thoughts and memories refer.

[14] William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, Modern Library College edition (1929; rpt. New York: Random House, 1967), p. 93. All subsequent references to SF are to this edition and will be given in the text, parenthetically, by title letters and page number.

[15] Richardson, p. 72.

[16] Hunt, pp. 56-57.

[17] Bleikasten, p. 98, is one of several critics who have noted the symbolic meaning underlying Quentin's plunge into the hog wallow: "His leap into the hog wallow is the enactment of an old Puritan metaphor, the symbolic performance of what his first and no doubt last sexual experiment means to him: yielding to the urges of the flesh equals wallowing in filth."

[18] Again, Bleikasten, p. 104, points out the symbolic nature of Quentin's punishment of Caddy: "As Caddy does not react in the expected way, he smears her body with mud. Symbolically he thus drags her down with him into the mire of sin, forcing her to share his assumed guilt. . . ."

I do not, however, agree completely with Bleikasten's interpretation of Quentin's motives. He asserts that Quentin is trying to re-establish, through shared defilement, the intimate relationship with Caddy which his game with Natalie has jeopardized. Although this may be part of the reason for Quentin's actions, it seems to me obvious that he feels Caddy is at least equally guilty because of her failure to enforce his code--that she too has "dirtied" herself by her indifference to his "dirty" behaviour with Natalie.

[19] Vickery, p. 38.

[20] Bleikasten, p. 100.

[21] I am aware that with regard to this part of Quentin's section, several questions might be raised concerning inconsistencies and/or improbabilities in the plot: how does the little Italian girl get into the bakery without ringing the bell? why does she follow Quentin? why does she pretend not to understand English? how does she manage to reach the wall beside the river before Quentin does? and, strangest of all, how does she know the exact point at which Quentin will scale the wall so that she can wait for him there? Interesting though these questions may be, they will not enter into my consideration of this part of the section,

as my purpose in this chapter is to examine Quentin's responses to external realities, not those realities themselves, in order to define the ways in which these responses are influenced by his family past.

[22] Vickery, p. 39.

[23] Hunt, p. 59, points out that Quentin's confession of incest is one of the ways in which he tries to assert the presence of meaning in his experience:

> . . . he needs in some way to relate sex to time and nature so that by establishing meaning in them he will prove Caddy's sexual deviations meaningful. . . . If he can outrage time and nature by some act so serious that his father and Caddy cannot deny its seriousness, he will establish, if only negatively, some meaning in the nature of things. . . . Thus it is that incest becomes the means by which he can at once relate himself to Caddy's world of experience, give significance to her world, and isolate himself with her in an eternal atonement for their violation of meaning.

Chapter IV

[1] André Bleikasten, Faulkner's As I Lay Dying, trans. Roger Little (1973; rpt. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), p. 89.

[2] Kenneth E. Richardson, Force and Faith in the Novels of William Faulkner (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 75.

[3] Olga W. Vickery, The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. 58.

[4] Calvin Bedient, "Pride and Nakedness: As I Lay Dying," Modern Language Quarterly, 29 (March, 1968), 67.

[5] Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963; rpt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 158.

[6] Brooks, p. 144.

[7] Vickery, p. 58.

[8] Jack Gordon Goellner, "A Closer Look at As I Lay Dying," Perspective, 7, No. 1 (Spring, 1954), 49.

[9] Frederick J. Hoffman, William Faulkner (1961; rpt. New York: Twayne, 1966), p. 62.

[10] Irving Howe, William Faulkner: A Critical Study (1951; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 181, 180.

[11] This is noted by Bleikasten, p. 88.

[12] Vickery, p. 52.

[13] William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying, Vintage Books edition (1930; rpt. New York: Random House, 1964), p. 109. All subsequent references to AILD are to this edition and will be given in the text, parenthetically, by title letters and page number.

[14] Edmond L. Volpe, A Reader's Guide to William Faulkner (New York: Noonday Press, 1964), pp. 377-382, analyzes the textual evidence and assigns the events of the novel to a time-span of ten days. According to his chronology, Addie dies in the late afternoon of the first day and is buried in the morning of the ninth day; thus her family is burdened with her corpse for nearly eight days.

[15] Bleikasten, p. 118.

[16] Howe, p. 183.

[17] Bleikasten, pp. 88-89.

[18] William J. Handy, "As I Lay Dying: Faulkner's Inner Reporter," Kenyon Review, 21, No. 3 (Summer, 1959), 444-445.

[19] Critics have varied widely in describing Darl's unusual powers of perception. Some (e.g., Brooks, p. 146) contend that he merely imagines the scenes he narrates from afar, without any real knowledge of what is taking place. Others (e.g., Hoffman, p. 64) recognize that Darl's perception is unnatural in that it is not limited by time and space, but do not attempt to give a name to his special abilities. Following the example of André Bleikasten, I have chosen "clairvoyance" as the most accurate word to describe Darl's superhuman powers of perception. Of course, Darl's capacity for seeing and knowing far exceeds that which is commonly described as clairvoyance. However, throughout my discussion of the novel I will be using the term "clairvoyance" in the larger sense defined by Bleikasten; that is, Darl's ability to both "report two scenes at the same time" (p. 55), only one of which he actually witnesses, and to discover "the secret links which bind the Bundrens together and . . . the hidden motivations which guide their behavior" (p. 57).

[20] Bleikasten, p. 89.

[21] Vickery, p. 58.

[22] It is, of course, because Darl cannot know by any natural means what has occurred during and after his mother's death that the reader would be inclined to question the accuracy of this account. However, the parallels which are shown to exist between Darl's account and those of Dewey Dell and Dr. Peabody establish, through precise duplication of detail, the fact that Darl is not simply speculating upon what may be happening, but is actually observing and reporting the scene clairvoyantly. By endowing Darl with superhuman perception, Faulkner is able to elevate him to the position of omniscient narrator at certain points in the novel.

[23] The reason Darl gives for Jewel's inability to lose his identity is ambiguous, but most probably refers to Jewel's illegitimacy, revealed much later in the novel. Because of it Jewel "is not what he is" (i.e., he is not really Anse's son, although almost everyone believes him to be), and "he is what he is not" (i.e., he is actually Whitfield's son, although he is not recognized as such).

[24] Bedient, p. 68.

[25] Vickery, p. 61.

[26] Bleikasten, p. 92, is one of several critics who note this parallel.

[27] Peter Swiggart, The Art of Faulkner's Novels (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), p. 120.

[28] Vickery, p. 54.

[29] Vickery, p. 54.

[30] Bleikasten, p. 88.

[31] Brooks, p. 147.

[32] Brooks, pp. 159-160.

Chapter V

[1] Of course, in Darl's case the influence of the ancestral past is only very indirect: his grandfather's outlook upon life influenced his mother's attitude toward life and toward her husband and children, which in turn influenced Darl through his fraternal relationship with Jewel.

[2] André Bleikasten, Faulkner's As I Lay Dying, trans. Roger Little (1973; rpt. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), p. 81, makes the interesting observation that in a sense Addie represents both the parental and ancestral family pasts, and that this accounts for her tremendous power to influence her descendants:

> Dead, and transformed by death into an indestructible presence, she exercises even more absolute power, comparable to that of the great paternal or ancestral shades which one senses hovering over so many of Faulkner's novels, and which seem by their very remoteness to increase their hold over the living.

If Bleikasten's argument is accepted, it is clear that although there is no significant ancestral influence in As I Lay Dying, the novel does nevertheless conform in a general way to the pattern of fraternal, parental, and ancestral pasts found in Sartoris and The Sound and the Fury.

[3] I do, however, recognize the different natures of the two undertakings. Obviously, it is far more difficult to effectively portray a character enslaved to the notion that his remote ancestors were better men than himself than to portray a character who is jealous, and for good reason, of a present and living brother. It is my opinion that in As I Lay Dying Faulkner is attempting less, but carrying out what he does attempt far more effectively, than in Sartoris and The Sound and the Fury.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Faulkner, William. Sartoris. Signet Classic edition. 1929; rpt. New York: New American Library, 1964.

--------. The Sound and the Fury. Modern Library College edition. 1929; rpt. New York: Random House, 1967.

--------. As I Lay Dying. Vintage Books edition. 1930; rpt. New York: Random House, 1964.

Secondary Sources

Adamowski, T. H. "Bayard Sartoris: Mourning and Melancholia." Literature and Psychology, 23, No. 4 (1973), 149-158.

Backman, Melvin. "Faulkner's Sick Heroes: Bayard Sartoris and Quentin Compson." Modern Fiction Studies, 2 (1956), 95-108.

--------. Faulkner, The Major Years: A Critical Study. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966.

Bedient, Calvin. "Pride and Nakedness: As I Lay Dying." Modern Language Quarterly, 29 (March, 1968), 61-76.

Bleikasten, André. Faulkner's As I Lay Dying. Trans. Roger Little. 1973; rpt. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974.

--------. The Most Splendid Failure: Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

Bradford, M. E. "Addie Bundren and the Design of As I Lay Dying." Southern Review, NS 6 (pt. II), No. 4 (October, 1970), 1093-1099.

Brooks, Cleanth. William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country. 1963; rpt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966.

--------. William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.

Campbell, Harry M. "Experiment and Achievement: As I Lay Dying and The Sound and the Fury." Sewanee Review, 51 (1943), 305-320.

Campbell, Harry M., and Ruel E. Foster. William Faulkner: A Critical Appraisal. 1951; rpt. New York: Cooper Square, 1970.

Cowan, Michael H., ed. Twentieth-Century Interpretations of The Sound and the Fury. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968.

Goellner, Jack Gordon. "A Closer Look at As I Lay Dying." Perspective, 7, No. 1 (Spring, 1954), 42-54.

Gold, Joseph. William Faulkner: A Study in Humanism, From Metaphor to Discourse. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966.

Goldman, Arnold. "Faulkner's Images of the Past: from Sartoris to The Unvanquished." Yearbook of English Studies, 8 (1978), 109-124.

Gwynn, Frederick L., and Joseph L. Blotner, eds. Faulkner in the University: Class Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957-1958. 1959; rpt. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977.

Handy, William J. "As I Lay Dying: Faulkner's Inner Reporter." Kenyon Review, 21, No. 3 (Summer, 1959), 437-451.

Hemenway, Robert. "Enigmas of Being in As I Lay Dying." Modern Fiction Studies, 16, No. 2 (Summer, 1970), 133-146.

Hoffman, Frederick J. William Faulkner. 1961; rpt. New York: Twayne, 1966.

--------, and Olga W. Vickery, eds. William Faulkner: Two Decades of Criticism. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1951.

--------. William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1960.

Howe, Irving. William Faulkner: A Critical Study. 1951; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

Hunt, John W. William Faulkner: Art in Theological Tension. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1965.

Leary, Lewis. William Faulkner of Yoknapatawpha County. New York: Crowell, 1973.

Levins, Lynn Gartrell. Faulkner's Heroic Design: The Yoknapatawpha Novels. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1976.

Longley, John L., Jr. The Tragic Mask: A Study of Faulkner's Heroes. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963.

Malin, Irving. William Faulkner: An Interpretation. 1957; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1972.

Meriwether, James B. "The Books of William Faulkner: A Guide for Students and Scholars." Mississippi Quarterly, 30, No. 3 (Summer, 1977), 417-428.

Millgate, Michael. The Achievement of William Faulkner. New York: Random House, 1966.

O'Connor, William Van. The Tangled Fire of William Faulkner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954.

Page, Ralph. "John Sartoris: Friend or Foe?" Arizona Quarterly, 23 (Spring, 1967), 27-33.

Peavy, Charles D. "'If I'd Just Had a Mother': Faulkner's Quentin Compson." Literature and Psychology, 23, No. 3 (1973), 114-121.

Richardson, Kenneth E. Force and Faith in the Novels of William Faulkner. The Hague: Mouton, 1967.

Roberts, James L. "The Individual and the Family: Faulkner's As I Lay Dying." Arizona Quarterly, 16 (Spring, 1960), 26-38.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. "William Faulkner's Sartoris." In Literary Essays. Trans. Annette Michelson. New York: Philosophical Library, 1957, 73-78.

Simon, John K. "What Are You Laughing At, Darl?: Madness and Humour in As I Lay Dying." College English, 25, No. 2 (November, 1963), 104-110.

Slatoff, Walter J. Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960.

Spilka, Mark. "Quentin Compson's Universal Grief." Contemporary Literature, 11, No. 4 (Autumn, 1970), 451-469.

Swiggart, Peter. "Moral and Temporal Order in The Sound and the Fury." Sewanee Review, 61 (Spring, 1953), 221-237.

--------. The Art of Faulkner's Novels. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963.

Thompson, Lawrance, afterword. Sartoris. By William Faulkner. Signet Classic edition. New York: New American Library, 1964.

--------. William Faulkner: An Introduction and Interpretation. American Authors and Critics Series. Ed. John Mahoney. 2nd ed. 1963; rpt. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967.

Vickery, Olga W. The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959.

Volpe, Edmond L. A Reader's Guide to William Faulkner. New York: Noonday Press, 1964.

Waggoner, Hyatt H. William Faulkner: From Jefferson to the World. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1959.

Warren, Robert Penn. Faulkner: A Collection of Critical Essays. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966.

Watson, James Gray. "'The Germ of My Apocrypha': Sartoris and the Search for Form." Mosaic, 7, No. 1 (Fall, 1973), 15-33.